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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Which do you prefer: Precinct-level representatives or islandwide representatives?

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NATION



A teenager opens fire in the cafeteria at a Cleveland high school, killing one.

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WORLD



Israel says it won't warn the U.S. if it decides to launch a pre-emptive strike against Iran.

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White House intern Mimi Alford recounts her affair with President John F. Kennedy.

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**Bill seeks to give lawmakers power to set residential CUC rates. PAGE 3
NMI now eligible for \$13M for small business credit initiative. PAGE 7**

Parole extensions start trickling in

»Paroles valid until December 2012

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Maries Balingit Hosain, 43, and her husband Md. Billal Hosain could well be among the first few to get a parole valid until Dec. 31, 2012, that is available to certain immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain "stateless" individuals in the CNMI.

Legislature tries to calm CHC

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Both the Senate and House are trying to calm Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. management and employees who might make good on their threat of walking out of their jobs over the financial crisis at the hospital, as lawmakers weigh further actions on two CHC-related bills that passed the Senate on Thursday night.

The Senate told two CHC officials and one concerned doctor from the private sector yesterday that the Senate actually gave a bit more to CHC than originally proposed in the \$11.58 million line of credit measure or House Bill 17-278 if one takes into account a second substituted legislation, H.B. 17-261, that they also passed Thursday night.

That second bill, HB 17-261, Senate Substitute 1, would amend the fiscal year 2012 budget law to make the \$5 million "seed" money appropriated to CHC as the state share of the required matching funds for Medicaid reimbursements to the corporation and would therefore yield a reimbursement of \$5 million that will also go to CHC.

The first bill authorizes the Marianas Public Land Trust to provide up to \$11.58 million line of credit to CHC.

Sen. Ralph Torres (R)
See LEGISLATURE on Page 4

Thousands of mostly parents of minor U.S. citizens are believed to have applied for such type of parole since November, but worker group leaders and members said they know of only a few who have so far been granted parole that's valid until the end of the year.

"We're happy to finally get our parole. Now my husband can file employment authorization so that he could start

working again. It's been tough especially the past few months. We are hoping Kilili's HR 1466 will become law," Mrs. Hosain, originally from the Philippines, told *Saipan Tribune*. Her husband is from Bangladesh.

The Hosain couple has two U.S. citizen daughters—a 5-year-old and a 2-year-old.

Mrs. Hosain said they applied for parole because they See PAROLE on Page 4

CHC urged to restore aid program for indigents

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Clients of the Medically Indigent Assistance Plan of the Commonwealth Health Center are calling for the program's restoration after its unexpected shutdown last year.

Bradley Tisa, a 32-year-old father of four, has no idea about the status of his pending MIAP renewal application. Tisa's MIAP card expired in July 2011 and he immediately submitted the requirements for renewal. The then MIAP of-

fice staffer told him to wait for five to 10 days for the result. That didn't happen because when he followed up on his application, the MIAP office had already shut down.

Since then, Tisa hasn't heard about his application and was even confused when told to go to the Governor's Office to direct his follow up, only to be referred back to CHC.

Tisa and his wife Nina are covered by the MIAP card, which has a yearlong validity. The couple had been a benefi-

ciary of the program since 2002, entitling them to a 75-percent discount on prescription drugs from PHI Pharmacy.

Riden Fiden, 62, also expressed frustration with the unexpected closure of the program, saying that recipients were never properly informed about it, creating a lot of confusion.

Saipan Tribune learned that Fiden's MIAP card covers his wife and four children. The family has been availing of this program since 1995. Fiden also wants to renew his expired card

but doesn't know where to go.

Fiden and Tisa shared that the MIAP program was a tremendous help as they only had to pay 25 percent of the cost of their prescription drugs.

On a monthly basis, each family spends over \$100 for prescription drugs, depending on the number of family members who get sick.

MIAP is a program established to provide assistance to non-insured indigents by providing discounted rates on See CHC on Page 4

CLEANUP

Joshua Santos of P&A Corp. operates a boom truck to rid a Garapan roadside yesterday afternoon of wood and other debris following the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s trimming of tree branches along Beach Road. Santos says most of these debris will be brought to the Marpi landfill, while others that could still be used for household materials will be set aside.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Local

Flame Tree Arts Festival returns to Civic Center

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture is prepping up for the upcoming Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival, which returns to its original schedule and venue this year.

The event, slated for April 20 to 22 at the Civic Center park in Susupe, marks the 31st anniversary of the CNMI's biggest annual festival.

Flame Tree Arts Festival celebrates the rich art and cultural heritage of the Commonwealth and takes place usually in late April in time for the blossoming of flame tree flowers after which the event was named.

Citing the late blooming of flame trees in the CNMI, the festival's 30th anniversary last year was moved to June 9 to 12 at the American Memorial Park. Due to logistics constraints, however, the Flame Tree Arts Festival Committee has decided to move it back to April at the Civic Center.

The annual festival features a wide selection of artwork from CNMI registered and non-registered artists—traditional or contemporary—using different mediums and with varied price ranges.

The event also showcases



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Members of the 31st Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival Committee pose for a group photo at the Arts Council office on Capitol Hill last week. Standing left to right, clockwise: Darrell Moteisou, special activities committee; Parker Y. Yobei, overall committee chair; Arts Council executive director Angel S. Hocog; Remy Buniag, off-island delegates committee; Erica Trinidad, registration committee; and Maria Castro, program committee. Not in photo is entertainment committee's Gordon Marciano.

presentations by local and guest performing groups and musicians, art demonstrations, and an array of festival food favorites.

The organizing committee, through overall chair Parker Y. Yobei, noted that they will strictly implement a ban on the sale of imported products or those that were not assembled or made in the CNMI.

"The Flame Tree Arts Festival aims to highlight local arts and crafts and we want to remind our artists and vendors to adhere to this rule," Yobei said.

Other members of the festival committee are Gordon Marciano who is in charge of entertainment; Remy Buniag, off-island delegates; Darrell Moteisou, special activities; Erica Trinidad, registration;

and Maria Castro, programs.

Registration is now open for artists, vendors, and other organizations that want to take part in the 31st festival celebration. Fee schedule is as follows: Arts Council registered artists, \$50; New or non-registered artists, \$150; Private commercial or food vendors, \$1,500 plus \$100 refundable trash deposit; Non-profit organizations, \$600; and Information booths, \$250.

Yobei said their fees are about the same as last year's rates or just enough to cover the expenses to be incurred for the festival.

"With the budget limitations of our council and the local government, it is through these fees and generous donations from sponsors that we will be able to host this event," he said.

Arts Council executive director Angel S. Hocog encouraged the community to patronize this year's festival. "We extend our gratitude to the public for their continued support in upholding the Commonwealth's arts and culture," he said. "We hope to see you in the 31st Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival."

To register or for more information, visit the Arts Council office next to the post office on Capitol Hill or call 322-9982 or 83.

CDA extends director's contract for 2 more years

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Development Authority board has extended the contract of executive director Manuel A. Sablan for another two years.

Sablan confirmed yesterday that the board made the decision during Wednesday's meeting. He said his new contract contains the "same terms and conditions." Sablan has an annual salary of \$70,000.

With the CNMI's "very trying situation," Sablan noted the challenges of being in charge of an agency tasked to stimulate economic development in the Commonwealth. But he also emphasized that there are many potential ventures

for the CNMI if only the right infrastructures are put in place.

"That's why it is very important that we try to be very pro-active in some of these things," Sablan told *Saipan Tribune*. "Yes, the economy has been very depressing but sometimes we just have to think how we can structure or set the business environment to bring operation costs down."

According to Sablan, the CNMI's dependence on fuel is a significant factor in the cost of doing business on the islands, hence



there should be emphasis on finding solutions to this problem such as venturing in alternative energy projects.

Citing the need to look for new sources of revenue, Sablan said CDA should also find ways to provide assistance to businesses by giving them access to credit facilities that would give them the financing to effectively perform and generate more income in the process.

He said companies need a loan or revolving credit line to keep their businesses going but often times, they do not meet the criteria set forth by these financial institutions.

"If we could structure something so that we could work with the bank and induce the bank to make the loan with CDA through government participation, then the borrower [business] will have the financing," said Sablan.

Sablan said the government should collaborate with commercial banks "as much as possible" in addressing the economic downturn on the islands.

RELATED NEWS

NMI now eligible for \$13M for small business credit initiative.

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NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION



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PUBLIC NOTICE

This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD funds.

COMBINED NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

February 29, 2012

Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Governor
Saipan, MP 96950 Tel: (670) 664-2000 or (670) 234-9447/6866

This notice shall satisfy the above-cited two separate but related procedural notification requirements.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or after March 16, 2012, the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Honolulu Field Office, for the release of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (PL 93-383), as amended, to undertake the following projects and purposes in Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands:

Project/Activity Type	Purpose	Location	Total Project Cost
Construction of Sinapalo Children's Park Perimeter Pathway	To construct a perimeter pathway at the Sinapalo Children's Park. The pathway will provide better access to the facilities within the Sinapalo Children's park.	Sinapalo, Rota	Anticipated Cost: \$60,000.00

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has determined that the above-listed projects will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation Central Office in Garapan, Saipan and may be examined or copied during regular work hours, Monday through Friday except CNMI or Austerity Holidays, from 7:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on the projects may submit written comments to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 or direct delivery to the central office in Garapan, Saipan. All comments received by March 15, 2012, will be considered by the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Commentors should specify which part of this Notice they are addressing.

RELEASE OF FUNDS

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands certifies to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Honolulu Field Office that the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Acting Governor Eloy S. Inos consent to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process, and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Honolulu Field Office acceptance of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and related laws and authorities, and allows the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands to use Program Funds.

OBJECTION TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD Honolulu Field Office will accept objections to its release of funds and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands certification for a period of fifteen days following anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if it is on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands; (b) the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient has incurred cost not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of the release of funds by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures of 24 CFR Part 58 and shall be addressed to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Honolulu Field Office, 1132 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96813. Potential objectors should contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

/s/ ELOY S. INOS
Acting Governor

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

/s/ VICENTE B. CASTRO
Acting Secretary of Public Works

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAM
Director of Procurement & Supply

Bill seeks to give lawmakers power to set residential CUC rates

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

If Reps. Janet Maratita (Ind-Saipan) and Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan) would have their way, lawmakers will assume the authority to set not only residential power and water rates but also reconnection fees.

They want to remove "any and all authority" of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the Commonwealth Public Utilities Corp. to set utility residential rates and reconnection fees and transfer those functions to

the CNMI Legislature.

Maratita said CUC and CPUC can still recommend rates but the final decision will rest with lawmakers.

"Lawmakers should be responsive and accountable to the people. We were elected to protect their interests, and that includes protecting their livelihood that is now being negatively affected by high power and water rates," Maratita told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview at her office yesterday.

Maratita pre-filed on Monday House Bill 17-283 that amends the Commonwealth

Code to remove CUC and CPUC's authority to set power and water rates for residential customers "without legislative authority and express approval by law."

"CUC and CPUC could also recommend residential rates, but it will be the Legislature that will decide on these rates," she said in an interview.

The bill says CUC utility rates and reconnection fees "have passed the level where they are reasonable."

"In addition, due to these high rates, residential customers who have had their services discon-

nected encounter what amounts to insult to injury when once the consumer can finally afford to pay the high arrears, there is yet another obstacle, an unreasonably high reconnection fee," it adds.

Setting commercial and government rates, however, will remain with CUC and CPUC, among other things.

Torres, in a separate interview yesterday, said he co-sponsored HB 17-283 "out of frustration with CUC" when it comes to disconnecting and reconnecting utility services for residential cus-

tomers.

"Where is the fair warning and due process, CUC? They disconnect customers' power and water without giving fair warning," he said.

Last month, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signed into law a measure that extends by seven days the 14-day grace period—for a total of 21 days after the billing due date—to allow longer time for CUC residential customers to settle their bill without being disconnected.

Torres, chairman of the House Committee on Public

Utilities, Transportation and Communication, said he expects the bill to be referred to his panel.

"We will call in CUC and CPUC for their inputs," he added.

Maratita, citing her bill, said utility rates and reconnection fees should be set by an entity "that is responsive to people, as opposed to a corporation with no motivation to keep rates low or a commission that may not address the public's concerns and presently does not have a quorum, assuming that it would want to do so."

\$30M resort investor asks DPL for 30 more days

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A representative of an investor planning to build a \$30-million, 300-room condominium-hotel resort asked the Department of Public Lands for an additional 30 days or up to March 31, 2012, to respond to DPL's question whether it is still interested in leasing a 5-hectare property in San Antonio.

Kang Ho Yu, authorized representative for Pacific Investment and Development Corp./Pacific Realty and Management Corp., made the request in a Feb. 22, one-page letter to DPL's Real Estate Division director Rachel M. Roque.

Kang said company president Cheong Pui Ng is currently off-island.

DPL Secretary Oscar M. Babauta, in an interview yesterday, said the department will grant the 30-day extension

He said if Pacific Investment is no longer interested, then DPL would offer the land for lease to

at least two other investors.

DPL sent a Jan. 25 letter to Pacific Investment and Development Corp., asking whether it is still interested in leasing Lot No. 004140 in San Antonio.

It is the same San Antonio property where a Korean investor, KSA Corp., previously proposed to build a hotel with villas and condotels. The KSA project did not materialize, resulting in DPL's termination of the public land lease in June 2008.

Babauta said DPL granted Pacific Investment in late 2010 a temporary authorization to allow it to enter the property for land clearing while the two parties were preparing a formal lease agreement. But more than a year later, they have yet to submit necessary requirements such as a for-

mal plan to develop the area, a financial plan, and architec-

tural and engineering design as proof of their commitment

and continued interest in leasing the land.

Pacific Investment and Development Corp., formerly Kevin International, is the

same group of investors that earlier expressed interest in investing over \$11 million in Coral Ocean Point Hotel and Golf Course.

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Fund, consultant: 61 percent actuarial rate unrealistic

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

NMI Retirement Fund board of trustees and its actuarial adviser, Buck Consultants, views the existing 61 percent actuarial contribution rate as not realistic anymore in these times of financial challenges and with an accrued unfunded liability that is already about \$1 billion.

At the same time, board chair Sixto K. Igosomar conceded Monday that government departments and agencies are not complying with the rate anyway, citing other obligations such as utility costs.

Buck Consultant principal

Dylan Porter agreed that the 61 percent is no longer feasible and expressed willingness to come up with a new calculation if the board wishes him to do so.

"I don't believe this actuarial rate [61 percent] is significant anymore considering that we are manipulating all the variables. We all know that we are deficient, we all know that we need \$1 billion...but we don't have it. So we need to start discussing this with our actuary to seek expert advice whether this actuarial rate is something we may need to change by statute," Igosomar told the board during nearly two hours of deliberation Monday.

waiver," she added.

Mrs. Hossain said she and her husband have been in the CNMI for years but recently lost their jobs because of the economic downturn. She used to be a house worker, while her husband is a former construction worker and auto mechanic. Her husband came to Saipan in 1995.

"We used to be on Rota and we have moved to Saipan. A friend offered his house to us in Garapan. It would be great if my husband gets employment authorization," she added.

At present, their U.S. citizen children receive \$109 in food stamp a month and another \$70 from the Women, Infants and

Dylan told the board that Buck continues calculating the actuarial rate in the method it has because of Public Law 6-17, which directs the step-by-step procedure on how it will be done. That law created the NMI Retirement Fund and its board of trustees.

Porter said the present actuarial rate doesn't have a connection to reality anymore and may need to be changed. However, he emphasized that any decision to adopt a new contribution rate still depends on the board.

He pointed out, however, that even if the actuarial rate is changed, the Fund still needs to lessen its payouts by cutting

members' benefits.

"If the answer is 80 percent, we will come back to the board with 80 percent [actuarial rate] but we still need the benefit cuts and that, in fact, is more important," said Porter.

Previous actuarial rates were 24 percent and 37 percent. The Fund began implementing the 61 percent employer contribution rate in October 2011. Since then, the board disclosed that government department and agencies are not complying with the new rate.

Some autonomous agencies even joined the pending lawsuit between the central government and the Fund in a bid to address

their delinquency with the pension agency.

Besides the central government, many agencies are also delinquent in their employer contributions for many years. Autonomous agencies and the central government accumulated a total of \$221.054 mil-

lion in unpaid employer contributions to the Fund as of Nov. 30 last year. Of the amount, \$181.042 million is owed by the CNMI government to the pension agency while \$40.012 million represents the unpaid obligation of autonomous departments.

General farmers meeting

This is to inform all farmers that the Department of Lands and Natural Resources will be hosting a general farmers meeting for election of new administrators for the Saipan and Northern Islands Soil and Water Conservation District. The term of office for the new

administrators is from fiscal year 2012 to 2015. The meeting will be held at the Kagman Division of Agriculture station on Wednesday, March 14, 2012, from 10am to 11:30am. For more information or any concerns, call 256-3319 and ask for Diana Gabaldon. (PR)

PAROLE

From Page 1

are among those covered by Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan's H.R. 1466, which seeks a grant of CNMI-only resident status for four groups of people including immediate relatives of minor U.S. citizens.

Mrs. Hosain, however, said they have asked United Workers Movement-NMI president Rabby Syed to help them request the federal government to waive the \$380 fee for the employment authorization document.

"We're both jobless and we can't afford to pay those. That's why we're asking for

Mrs. Hossain said she and her husband have been in the CNMI for years but recently lost their jobs because of the economic downturn. She used to be a house worker, while her husband is a former construction worker and auto mechanic. Her husband came to Saipan in 1995.

"We used to be on Rota and we have moved to Saipan. A friend offered his house to us in Garapan. It would be great if my husband gets employment authorization," she added.

At present, their U.S. citizen children receive \$109 in food stamp a month and another \$70 from the Women, Infants and

Children Program, which help them survive.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced in November that it is considering, on a case-by-case basis, applications for parole for immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and certain "stateless" individuals to allow them to lawfully remain in the CNMI.

Syed, Marianas Advocates for Humanitarian Affairs Ltd. president Rene Reyes, and Dekada Movement president Bonifacio Sagana said they have heard of only a few who have already gotten their so-called immediate relative or IR parole that's valid until the end of 2012.

"But I am optimistic that

most if not all of those who applied for IR parole or humanitarian parole will be granted. We haven't heard of denials or rejections," said Syed, who left for New York and Washington, D.C. to continue to press the U.S. government to grant legal, long-term foreign workers in the CNMI "green card" or pathway to citizenship.

Sagana, for his part, said the lack of decision on most applications for parole is putting a lot of foreigners in limbo.

"Those who are applying for renewal of their children's food stamp for example don't have anything to show the food stamp office because their umbrella permit is no longer valid,

they don't have a CW receipt because no CW permit was applied for, and they don't have any humanitarian or IR parole yet," Sagana said.

Those who have already been granted parole and would like to work need to apply for an employment authorization document or EAD, which has a filing fee of \$380.

Denial

Rogelio Cada, 79, said yesterday his application for humanitarian parole was denied and he's appealing that denial.

He said he applied for parole not because he has a minor U.S. child but because he has been a legal worker in the CNMI for

LEGISLATURE

From Page 1

Saipan) said that in essence, with the two bills combined, CHC will get a bit more than \$10 million in the \$11.58 million line of credit bill.

That additional amount for CHC is about \$1.5 million if the two Senate-substituted bills are combined and signed into law.

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos said in the fiscal year 2012 budget law, only \$2.4 million was identified as available for local match under the Medicaid program. What that means, he said, is the CNMI can only get Medicaid reimbursements only up to the amount of local match available, which is \$2.4 million.

But by amending Public Law 17-55 to identify the \$5 million "seed" money for CHC as state share for Medicaid, "that will yield a \$5 million reimbursement for Medicaid which will benefit CHC," Inos said.

Back to the House

The two Senate substitute bills are back in the House where they originated, but some House members said yesterday they are concerned about the Senate amendments.

Most House members asked for comment yesterday said they have yet to read the Senate substitute for HB 17-278, which was already transmitted to the House on Friday so that House members could start reading them.

Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), author of HB 17-278, said he's "shocked" by the Senate's action on his \$11.58 million line of credit bill for CHC, knowing that the corporation needs immediate cash infusion.

"As the author of the bill, it's hard for me to accept what the Senate has done to the bill, giving much less money to CHC than what we had proposed," Basa said.

Basa, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee,

said the House will either reject or approve the substitute HB 17-278, or refer it to his committee for further review.

As of yesterday, there's no telling when the House will hold another session.

Basa also said what the Senate did to his bill could be unconstitutional, because the Senate added other subjects or items to the legislation.

For example, instead of just focusing on the MPLT line of credit for CHC, the Senate changed the board of trustees into a "governing" body rather than an "advisory" one and removed the governor's power to appoint CHC's chief executive officer and give that power to the board of trustees. Senators also reduced the number of board members from seven to five.

Moreover, House members are not aware of the second bill that the Senate also passed on Thursday night to supposedly make up for the loss of money

for CHC in the first bill.

HB 17-261, authored by Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan), seeks to amend the 2012 budget law to extend the 90-day window before eliminating unfilled job vacancies.

The Senate passed a substitute version of HB 17-261 to make the \$5 million "seed" money for CHC as CNMI matching fund for Medicaid.

'We care about CHC'

Torres, chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, said the Senate "cares about the health of our people and the corporation."

"Last year, when the hospital's emergency room was about to be shut down because of lack of money to buy needed reagent and other stuff, the Senate identified \$1.3 million from CDA interest, and that helped the ER stay open. Now the two bills we passed last week would also help CHC," Torres told *Saipan Tribune*.

Torres said he and Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) met yesterday afternoon with CHC's Medical Affairs director Dr. Michael Deary and CHC inpatient pharmacist Anthony Raho, as well as with Dr. Tony Stearns of the Marianas Medical Center.

Torres said that contrary to what others might think, CHC does need a CT scanner, which he proposes to buy using \$583,000 from federal repayment of a total of \$1.58 million.

"We need to start providing equipment and specialized service here in the CNMI to alleviate medical referrals," Torres added.

In the \$11.58 million line of credit bill, \$1.58 million is for the electronic health information technology initiative that will be repaid using federal grants, leaving \$10 million for CHC as proposed by the House.

Of the \$10 million, however, the Senate gave \$3.5 million to the Public School System to pay its debt to the Commonwealth

Utilities Corp. Another \$1.5 million was set aside by the Senate for CHC's payment of its debt to CUC.

This means some \$5 million is left for CHC to decide where to spend, or half of the \$10 million it was hoping for.

Torres said the Senate wanted to make up for the difference by substituting another bill that will provide an additional \$5 million to CHC. He also said the \$1.5 million is actually CHC's debt to CUC.

"Last week, CUC said it was about to cut off power to CHC and PSS if there's no plan to pay their debts. Because the Senate found another source of money for CHC, we decided to also give money from the loan to CUC as payment for both CHC and PSS outstanding debts," said Torres.

He clarified that the \$3.5 million that will go to CUC as payment for CHC obligations will be repaid from the general fund, and will not be repaid by CHC.

CHC

From Page 1

their prescription drugs as determined by the Department of Public Health. It was funded by Compact impact money the federal government gives the CNMI every year.

For several years, DPH contracted PHI Pharmacy to provide this service to MIAP clients, who are mostly citizens of the Federated States

of Micronesia.

Active members still availing services

PHI Pharmacy vice president and owner Bruce Cohen confirmed yesterday that the company continues to provide discounts to MIAP clients whose cards are active. He estimates that about 100 MIAP clients continue to avail of this service. Those whose cards have expired lose the benefit.

During a board meeting in January, several corporation

board members expressed their desire to transfer responsibility over the MIAP program to the Medicaid Office, which is under the Executive Branch.

That has not happened. Medicaid administrator Helen Sablan affirmed yesterday that her office does not handle the MIAP program.

"No, Medicaid is not handling MIAP. MIAP was a DPH program for CHC services. MIAP was never used and was not intended for services from private providers, except

to account for the medically indigent at the PHI Pharmacy located at CHC. The Medicaid program, including its administrative costs for running the program, are co-shared by the federal and CNMI governments. We feel it would be improper to put a local and hospital program under a program paid by the federal program, even if it's co-shared," she said.

Revival in the works

According to Anthony Raho, director of CHC Pharmacy and

a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. board, the program will soon be revived.

"The advisory board has acknowledged this responsibility and made a recommendation to the CEO to re-establish a MIAP program. I am aware that the CEO has instructed the administrative staff to get this re-implemented as soon as possible," Raho told *Saipan Tribune*.

Raho asked the public's patience as the corporation transition programs from the old De-

partment of Public Health to the new corporation. "I believe the corporation's MIAP program should be up and running very shortly," he added.

He said Public Law 16-51, or the Commonwealth Healthcare Act, mandates the corporation to establish and administer a subsidy program to provide healthcare to low-income individuals.

Raho said he is not aware of any patients that were under the old MIAP program that have been refused any healthcare services.

Healthcare corporation hires Santos as new CFAO

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. has hired Alvaro Santos as its new chief financial administrative officer, a position vacated by former acting deputy for hospital administration Esther Muñoz who resigned in December.

Santos confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that his contract is for one year and that he formally started on

259 SHEFA applications OK'd

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance board of directors has approved financial awards for over 250 students this semester and ordered the submission of check requests to the Department of Finance.

SHEFA received a total of 435 applications for the spring 2012 semester. Of this number, 259 were deemed eligible for financial assistance, while 36 have so far been denied due to noncompliance with requirements or lack of supporting documents.

SHEFA administrator Henry Hofsneider told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that 141 applications will still be reviewed until next week.

It was learned that SHEFA submitted to Finance yesterday its first request for checks for the spring 2012 semester. Hofsneider said the checks amount

Monday, Feb. 27.

A retiree and a board member of the Marianas Public Land Trust, Santos acknowledged the deep financial crisis besetting the corporation, which only has a \$5-million budget this year for personnel and operations, but said he is confident that he will meet the expectations of the job.

As CFAO, Santos is now a key member of the corporation's six-



Santos

member management team, which directly reports to chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta.

Santos said that he was hired to help the corporation set up a financial system that will aid the agency in becoming self-sufficient and effective in its management and operation. He said the corporation's financial setup is at a "critical stage" and must be given high priority

because it is a determining factor in the corporation's success.

Santos admitted that his initial review of the corporation's financial records was sobering. With just \$5 million allocated for its 600 personnel and operations, he said the board needs to "prioritize."

He also emphasized the need to boost the hospital's collection and the implementation of more aggressive efforts to generate revenue for the corporation. He also aims to eliminate

"unnecessary costs" but did not elaborate.

Santos said that pursuant to the law that created the corporation, it clearly spells out the need for the agency to have its own financial management system so it could fully break away from the Department of Finance or the central government. He said the corporation is still at a "critical transition period," which is why it is still being assisted by the central government.

Once a new financial manage-

ment system is in place, Santos said he needs to train personnel to help maintain it.

Last Friday, not all of the corporation's personnel got their paychecks on time, mainly because of cash flow problems, but Santos said that all paychecks have already been released yesterday.

He refused to comment on other issues relating to finances such as delayed housing, unremitted health insurance premium, credit union members' payment and contributions of employees to private retirement plan. But he vowed to address those issues at a later date.

sault and battery and the OAG will recommend a sentence of time served.

Basaliso testified for the government in the trial of his cousin and co-defendant, Nestor C. Taitano. He admitted beating up and taking the wallet of Chinese national Guoxi Liang in San Antonio on April 2, 2011. Taitano was acquitted in the case. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Bench warrant for rob suspect quashed

Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho quashed yesterday the bench warrant he issued against the suspect in a robbery case where the victim, a 65-year-old masseur, was also beaten up.

Assistant attorney general Eileen Wisor recommended quashing the warrant after suspect Joshua Basaliso vol-

untarily appeared in court with his court-appointed counsel, Antonio Atalig.

Atalig, who substituted for attorney Douglas Cushing, explained that they failed to attend Monday's change of plea hearing due to problems with the "flow of information."

Camacho set the new change

Civil Procedure.

Specifically, Huesman said, the unnamed retirees claim that the court has already decided the motion in "Jorgensen's favor."

"The board is unaware of any such resolution of the motion. In fact, the court's most recent substantive order, denying the [unnamed plaintiffs'] motion to lift stay, does not address the

motion," the lawyer said.

Currently, Huesman said, there is a March 1, 2012, hearing set for the board's motion to force Jorgensen to associate with a local lawyer.

Jorgensen, on behalf of the two unnamed retirees, is suing Fitial and the Fund over the alleged non-payment of their retirement benefits. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Fund board asks court to set hearing date on suit filed by 2 unnamed retirees

The NMI Retirement Fund's board and its three board members have asked the federal court to set a hearing date in connection with the lawsuit filed by two unnamed retirees against Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and the Fund.

The Fund's board and board members Pedro Q. Dela Cruz, Sixto K. Igisomar, and Adelina C. Roberto, through counsel Braddock J. Huesman, asked

the U.S. District Court for the NMI to set the hearing because they are not aware of the court's subsequent ruling regarding a motion.

Huesman said his clients have asked the court to impose sanctions against Bruce Jorgensen, counsel for the unnamed retirees, for filing a motion for an improper purpose in violation of Federal Rule of

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Ex-cop allegedly steals \$3,500 from auto shop customer

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Police arrested Monday afternoon a former police officer who allegedly stole \$3,500 in cash by deceiving a customer of a car shop.

Police served the arrest warrant on Servando C. Regis in Finausis on charges of theft, theft by deception, and theft by failure to make required disposition

of funds received.

His bail was set at \$7,500 cash.

The 37-year-old Regis was brought before Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho yesterday afternoon for his initial court appearance.

Detective Alexander Sakisat stated in his report that an employee of the Bureau of Motor Vehicle who is a sister of the victim first reported the theft incident to the

Department of Public Safety on Tuesday, Feb. 21.

Sakisat said that preliminary investigation showed that the victim in this case is Emilio Santos and the suspect is Regis, a former police officer who now claims to be working for the TBK Auto Shop.

Santos claims that he made several payments to Regis totaling \$3,500 for the repair of

his car. Despite the payments, Regis allegedly never handed Santos any receipts.

Santos stated that, in one instance, Regis called him on Jan. 27, 2012, and again asked for payment. Regis allegedly instructed Santos to place the money inside an envelope and bring it to the Marianas High School Gymnasium at 5pm.

Trusting in the fact that Regis is

a former police officer, Santos did as instructed.

Two days later, Jan. 29, Santos went to the TBK Auto Shop to follow up on his vehicle. A worker at TBK told Santos that they never worked on his vehicle because they never got any payment.

The TBK worker said that Regis used to be a runner for TBK, but was no longer employed

there. Regis allegedly quit his job because he had been "ripping off" customers and lying to them.

On Feb. 23, 2012, police detectives Sakisat and Jonathan Decena interviewed David Phan, the manager of TBK. Sakisat learned from that interview that Regis began working for TBK on Nov. 28, 2011, but he never returned after getting off from work on Jan. 24, 2012.

2 banks said interested in Fund's home loan program

Two local banks have expressed interest in acquiring the NMI Retirement Fund's member home loan program for an undisclosed amount, according to Fund board chair Sixto K. Igisomar.

He refused, however, to identify these banks, saying that negotiations are ongoing and

that they are still finalizing the transaction.

The board decided last month to sell the program to free the Fund from the burden of handling it. The Fund earlier disclosed that the program has been yielding low returns and has a high delinquency ratio,

among other concerns.

On Friday, Igisomar told *Saipan Tribune* that the program's delinquency rate is at 37 percent.

The member home loan program is among the Fund's local investments. The agency has invested \$5.5 million in this

program, of which a significant amount has yet to be collected from borrowers.

Fund records show that the program has a total of 106 loans, of which 31 are considered bad loans or delinquent. Of these bad loans, only two are potentially

recoverable while the rest are considered "dead accounts." Bad loans were estimated at close to \$800,000 as of December 2010.

Igisomar disclosed that the board has tried several times to save the program but it seems the best way to do it is outsource or sell the entire portfolio, probably to a bank.

"Historically, there are issues about the program and we're trying to balance the cost associated with this program. Although there are great benefits to members, there were also some challenges and areas that the Fund believes require its attention," he earlier told *Saipan Tribune*. (*Moneth Deposa*)

Approve new zoning law without floor amendments

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Zoning Board chair Diego Blanco is urging the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation to adopt the 2012 Saipan Zoning Law without any additional floor amendments.

Blanco, in a Feb. 23 letter to delegation chair Rep. Ramon A. Tebuteb (R-Saipan) about House

Local Bill 17-26, said that the Zoning board is "strongly in favor" of amending the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 to make it "more workable" for the island.

However, Blanco said they "cannot endorse the haphazard and destructive process of zoning" by adopting the floor amendments.

"We feel that the additional floor amendments would rezone

much of the island of Saipan without sufficient consideration of the public's concerns or the principles of zoning," Blanco said.

He reminded Tebuteb and the delegation that the Zoning board and office conducted about nine hearings in 2011 in addition to the "many" public hearings from 2009 to 2010 "at the request of the Legislature on a proposed amendment that was substantially similar to the current floor amendments to the bill."

The Zoning board and office, Blanco said, ended their efforts to gather public comments on June 30, 2011.

"It found that, generally, public reaction to rezoning most of the paved roads as "mixed commercial" was highly unfavorable and that public turnout for the hearing on this issue was

CDA board eyes \$1.1M budget for 2013

The Commonwealth Development Authority is poised to submit to the Office of Management and Budget its budget for fiscal year 2013.

CDA executive director Manuel A. Sablan said yesterday that the board approved at its meeting last Wednesday the fiscal year 2013 budget of roughly \$1.1 million.

Sablan noted that the agency's efforts to lower operational costs were reflected in this amount, which is about \$40,000 lower than the 2012 budget.

According to Sablan, the agency's biggest expense is employees' salaries and benefits, which do not have any changes

significant," said Blanco.

On July 7, 2011, the Zoning board unanimously voted to recommend to the delegation the disapproval of the wholesale rezoning of paved roads to mixed commercial after considering the public comments and the staff's recommendations.

Blanco noted, though, that they did consider other aspects of the current floor amendments.

According to Blanco, the Zoning board's recommendations were incorporated in the revised zoning map and the new proposed zoning law that is "the culmination of many years of work."

"Unfortunately, all of the board's and office's efforts were dismantled by the ill-considered adoption of several pages of floor amendments without adequate consideration," he added.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Sending wonderful leap year wishes and a celebration to last four years and beyond to Oneil Miguel Manicdiao Magno. Happy 12th birthday! From your Ninang Maricar, Tito Dick, Mom, Tat, Naju and Inku.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB 12-DPS-042 (A)(B)**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 15, 2012 TIME: 1:00 P.M.

"TO UPGRADE, CONDUCT TRAINING, PROVIDE MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT FOR THE CNMI PREHOSPITAL DATA COLLECTION AND PATIENT CARE REPORTING SYSTEM FOR THE ISLANDS OF SAIPAN, ROTA AND TINIAN"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS AND SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PROJECT SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO FIE CHIEF TOMAS M. MANGLONA AT (670) 664-9137 AND MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, MARCH 05, 2012.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RAMON C. MAFNAS
COMMISSIONER, DEPT. OF PUBLIC SAFETY

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLON
DIRECTOR, P&S

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEY FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS : CIVIL ACTION
HOUSING CORPORATION, : NO. 12-0005
Plaintiff, :
-v- :
ALFONSINA M. ARJU :
and ARJU ARJU, :
Defendants. :
SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANTS:
YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of our answer to THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC, the Plaintiff's attorneys, whose address is Post Office Box 5222, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

Dated February 10, 2012 by order of the Clerk:

/s/ Clerk of Court

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
TINIAN MUNICIPAL SCHOLARSHIP BOARD
c/o Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Tinian and Aguijan
P.O. Box 520059, Tinian, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 433-1800/1806 Fax: (670) 433-1819
Email: tinianscholarship@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board hereby gives notice that there will be a Regular Board Meeting on Friday, March 2, 2012 at 3:00 p.m. at the Mayor's Office Conference Room, 1st Floor, in San Jose Village, Tinian.

AGENDA

I. Preliminary

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes
 - a. 01/13/2012 Regular Board Meeting
 - b. 01/18/2012 Regular Board Meeting
 - c. 02/03/2012 Regular Board Meeting
 - d. 02/24/2012 Regular Board Meeting

II. Public Comments¹

III. Executive Session²

IV. Unfinished Business

V. New Business

1. Adoption of Proposed Regulations as Emergency Regulations

VI. Miscellaneous Matters

VII. Discussion of Agenda for Next Board meeting

VIII. Adjournment

/S/ ERIC C. SAN NICOLAS
Chairman

1 We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.

2 Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

1 Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.

2 Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

NMI now eligible for \$13M for small business credit initiative

» Aim is to leverage \$130M in private credit over seven years

WASHINGTON, D.C.—CNMI Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan said yesterday that the Department of the Treasury has approved the Commonwealth as a “participating state” in the State Small Business Credit Initiative established by the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010. As a result, the CNMI is now eligible to receive \$13,168,350 to use for programs that support lending to small businesses and manufacturers. Every federal dollar is required to leverage \$10 of private lending.

“The Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 is one more product of the Democratic 111th Congress that will be benefiting the Northern Mariana Islands for years to come,” Sablan said. “The \$13 million announced today will

make it easier for small businesses that want to expand and for entrepreneurs, who want to start a new business, to get access to the capital they need.

“Over the next seven years, \$130 million in private capital could be added to our economy as a result of the Small Business Credit Initiative.”

According to the Government Accountability Office, which is responsible for annual audits of the new program, the Commonwealth plans to use \$6,168,350 of the funds for the CNMI Loan Purchase Participation Program and the remaining \$7 million for the CNMI Collateral Support Program.

Sablan congratulated Commerce Secretary Sixto Igisomar, whose department will be responsible for managing the federal funds and encouraging private lending to small businesses.

The congressman also recognized and acknowledged the Commonwealth Development Authority board of directors and executive director Manual A. Sablan for the year’s work CDA put in to the successful application.

“CDA’s journeyman work laid the foundation for today’s announcement,” Sablan said.

Sablan has been encouraging the CNMI government to take advantage of the money the Small Business Jobs Act makes available since announcing the Northern Marianas would be allocated \$13 million, the same amount as 28 of the U.S. states. In November 2010, as the

deadline for filing a notice of intent approached and learning that the CNMI had not contacted Treasury, Sablan alerted Gov. Benigno R. Fitial of the need to let Treasury know the CNMI would participate. In December of that year the congressman again advised the governor of the June deadline for filing the actual application.

“With our economy struggling and access to credit a problem for small businesses, I did not want to see the opportunity slip by,” Sablan said.

“The CNMI had the same level of support as half of the U.S. states, yet we probably have the smallest overall economy. So, this credit initiative could have an outsized positive impact for us.”

Initially, the governor designated the Commonwealth Development Authority to take the lead on the credit program. After two applications were turned down by Treasury because of doubts about the financial viability of CDA, however, Sablan recommended that Treasury work with Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos on alternative arrangements. That was in November 2011.

As a result, the CNMI Department of Commerce was chosen to be the official applicant for the Northern Marianas’ \$13 million share of the Small Business Credit Initiative; and Treasury announced its approval yesterday.

There are still a number of procedural steps. CNMI and Treasury must sign an Allocation Agreement by March 12 and the CNMI must provide

an approved legal opinion and other required documents.

After that is complete, the first one-third of the federal funds, \$4,345,555 will be transferred to the Commonwealth. When 80 percent of that money is used, a second \$4 million will be provided.

The CNMI will be required to file quarterly reports on its use of the funds, including how the money is being targeted to low- and moderate-income communities, and minority- and women-owned businesses.

“Our economy has a steep road to recovery,” Sablan said. “But I am hopeful that this new initiative, resulting from the Small Business Jobs Act we passed in the Democratic Congress in 2010, will help us begin to revive.” *(Office of the Delegate)*

Nation’s governors push job creation, economic growth

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Gov. Benigno R. Fitial joined other governors from across the country this weekend in Washington, D.C. for the 2012 National Governors Association Winter Meeting. Fitial and his colleagues also met with President Obama, members of his administration, business leaders and other experts for discussions about a variety of issues and challenges affecting states.

This year’s NGA Chairman’s Initiative, “Growing State Economies,” aims to provide governors and state policymakers with better options to assess the economic environment in their state or territory and to create strategies designed to foster growth. Jim Clifton, chairman and chief executive officer of Gallup, highlighted the opening session with a presentation and discussion on the economy.

“I am extremely pleased that this year’s chairman chose to put economy at the top of the agenda,” said Fitial. “The issue of economy is the most important priority for us in the Commonwealth. The lieutenant governor and I



From left, governors Eddie Calvo (Guam), Togiola Tulafono (American Samoa), Benigno Fitial (CNMI), John DeJongh, Jr. (Virgin Islands), Luis Fortuno (Puerto Rico), and Neil Abercrombie (Hawaii) displayed a unified stance at the NGA on issues affecting the territories.

have placed considerable focus on reinvigorating our economy and realizing job creation. No matter how you put it, economic growth is key to our future.”

On Sunday, the Education, Early Childhood and Workforce Committee examined the governors’ efforts to end childhood hunger. Concurrently, the Health and Human Services Committee session focused on new strategies to improve the nation’s road to wellness, enhance the delivery and efficiency of health care services and increase the long-term sustainability of health care. The Natural Resources Committee discussed the world’s energy future while the Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee explored the changing role of the National Guard.

“Each governor has significant issues and challenges facing their respective state and this forum allows us to formulate solutions to address them,” added Fitial. “We want to create environments where businesses can grow and create jobs. I definitely would like to see a Commonwealth with more people getting back to work and less people depending on welfare benefits.” *(Office of the Governor)*

Notice of Zoning Board Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Wednesday, March 14, 2012 at 5:00 PM, Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Bldg, Saipan (Tel: 234-9661 • Fax: 234-9666 • e-mail: www.zoning.gov.mp)

A. Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of February 15, 2012 minutes
5. Public Comments (not related to files for discussion under item B. Public Hearings)

B. Public Hearings

1. Conditional Use Application #2011-3009: Mr. John Hosono of Top Shot Playstation is proposing to operate Outdoor Amusement games which would include paintball, archery, shooting range, and bike trails on a 48,000 square meters of vacant land. This proposal will be located in Sadog Tasi, below Capitol Hill, on track #22616 REM. This area is zoned as Rural Zoning District and may be accessed from the Sadog Tasi Mobil gas station on Isa Drive or the Puerto Rico Shell gas station on Chalan Pale Arnold road.
2. Enforcement Hearing on Notice of Violation (NOV) # 2011-2900, issued 2/8/12, to Mr. Rommel Ronquillo for an unpermitted activity under section 404(b) and (c) of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008, raising roosters within a Village Residential zone. This property is located along Texas Road, Susupe, on lot 056 H 14, behind Marianas High School. Mr. Ronquillo appeals the order of the Acting Zoning Administrator to remove 45 roosters from his home and the associated penalties for failing to correct the violation to the Zoning Board pursuant to section 1406 of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008.

C. Communications/ Reports

1. Update on the proposed Saipan Zoning Law of 2012

E. New Business

1. Office operations report

F. Executive (Closed) Session.

G. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Therese T. O’Gumoro, Acting Zoning Administrator, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Zoning Board Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for Enforcement – Notice of Violation #2011-2900

The public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this Enforcement Hearing on Notice of Violation (NOV) # 2011-2900, issued 2/8/12, to Mr. Rommel Ronquillo for an unpermitted activity under section 404(b) and (c) of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008, raising roosters within a Village Residential zone. This property is located along Texas Road, Susupe, on lot 056 H 14, behind Marianas High School. Mr. Ronquillo appeals the order of the Acting Zoning Administrator to remove 45 roosters from his home and the associated penalties for failing to correct the violation to the Zoning Board pursuant to section 1406 of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008.

Date: March 14, 2012, Wednesday

Time: 5:00 pm

Place: Zoning Board Conference Room,
2nd flr, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan

The above file may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. Comments on this enforcement may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted via email to sitataqa@yahoo.com or www.zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to the Zoning Board, Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 or addressed to “BOARD CHAIRMAN” and delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan no later than 4:30pm on March 13, 2012.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Saipan Zoning Law of 2008).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Board Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for Top Shot Playstation

The public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Mr. John Hosono of Top Shot Playstation is proposing to operate Outdoor Amusement games which would include paintball, archery, shooting range, and bike trails on a 48,000 square meters of vacant land. This proposal will be located in Sadog Tasi, below Capitol Hill, on track #22616 REM. This area is zoned as Rural Zoning District and may be accessed from the Sadog Tasi Mobil gas station on Isa Drive or the Puerto Rico Shell gas station on Chalan Pale Arnold road.

Date: March 14, 2012, Wednesday

Time: 5:00 pm

Place: Zoning Board Conference Room,
2nd flr, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan

The above application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. Comments on the projects may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments shall be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office no later than 4:30pm, March 13, 2012. Written comments may also be submitted via email to therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Saipan Zoning Law of 2008).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Board Chairman

High surf until Saturday; caution urged

APRA HARBOR, Guam—Coast Guard Sector Guam warns boaters and beach goers to exercise caution in all waters across Micronesia through this week.

The National Weather Service has issued a small craft advisory for all coastal waters surrounding Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

The small craft advisory will be in effect for all the islands through Saturday morning. Seas peaking near 12 feet can be expected, combined with high winds between 20 and 25 knots making conditions exceptionally dangerous for small vessels and swimmers.

The National Weather Service recommends mariners operating small vessels should avoid operating in these conditions. Mariners should only travel if necessary and check the current and forecasted weather conditions prior to getting underway. These conditions are especially hazardous when entering or leaving harbors

and near inlets and reef lines. Mariners should remain aware of changing conditions once on the water. Coast Guard Sector Guam advises mariners: If in doubt, don't go out!

Boaters are strongly encouraged to have a VHF marine radio on board to monitor weather conditions, com-

ON THE NET

- Safety equipment requirements: <http://www.uscgboating.org/>
- Weather advisories: <http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/>

municate with other mariners and call for help in the event of an emergency.

The Coast Guard reminds all mariners that channel 16 is the emergency channel and is monitored around-the-clock.

In addition, marinas and local boaters are reminded to check that boats in port are properly secured, bilge pumps are functional, and all loose items are removed from decks. Report any boats adrift, pollution or other maritime emer-

gencies to the Coast Guard Sector Guam Command Center at 671-564-USCG.

Before you take to the water, Coast Sector Guam advises mariners to consider the following:

■ Leave a float plan with a responsible individual who knows your intentions, location and who they should call if you do not return as scheduled.

■ Always have flares and other visual distress signals on board. Inspect them regularly; they can save your life and help rescuers find you at night should you be in distress.

■ Wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket and set the example for your passengers or paddling partners. Before getting underway, verify you have enough life jackets for everyone on board.

■ Maintain awareness on the water—be aware of activity around your vessel including changing weather, and always know your location.

■ Don't boat alone—boating alone is not recommended. Recreational paddlers canoeists and kayakers often travel with a single craft and one partner, or even solo, but it is recommended you canoe, kayak or boat with at least three people or two craft.

■ Kayakers and paddlers are highly encouraged to use the Paddle Smart Identification Sticker. In situations where a craft is found without its paddler, this sticker permits the Coast Guard to quickly identify who to contact. Get yours today from the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

■ Know your limitations—be honest with yourself and your companions. Your life and the lives of those in your party may depend on how everyone understands each other's capabilities. (USCG)

USCG, Marshalls in joint fisheries enforcement mission

HONOLULU—The crew of the Coast Guard cutter *Jarvis* and representatives from the Republic of the Marshall Islands will exercise a bilateral agreement to enforce the fisheries laws of the region during a joint operation following a visit to the island of Majuro Monday. Shipriders from the Marshall Islands will embark on the *Jarvis* to assist in patrolling the Marshall Islands' exclusive economic zone against illegal fishing activities.

A Marshall Islands Sea Patrol officer and a Marshall Islands Marine Resources Administration representative will conduct unified surveillance and interdiction opera-

tions while aboard the *Jarvis*. This partnership will exercise the U.S. and Republic of the Marshall Islands' bilateral agreement concerning cooperation to enforce the Marshall Islands exclusive economic zone. The objective of the bilateral agreement is to strengthen ongoing cooperative maritime surveillance and interdiction activities between the two parties to identify and prevent illicit transnational maritime activity. This effort is aimed at sustaining the international tuna fishery.

Rear Adm. Charles W. Ray, commander of the 14th Coast Guard District, and the crew of the *Jarvis*, are scheduled to

conduct community outreach and official engagements during their visit to Majuro. The *Jarvis*'s crew plans to visit local elementary and high schools and take part in games of basketball and volleyball.

Ray will meet with Marshall Islands government officials and agency representatives, including members of the Port Security and Search and Rescue Committees, Marshall Islands Marine Resources Agency, and Ambassador Martha Campbell. Two key items of discussion will be search and rescue cooperation and the shiprider agreement between the U.S. and Marshall Islands.

The *Jarvis* is a 378-foot high endurance cutter homeported in Honolulu. By implementing the bilateral agreement, the *Jarvis* and its crew will be ensuring the prosperity of the region by protecting the marine ecosystems and natural resources important to the national economy and essential to the livelihood and way of life for coastal communities. The agreement that allows shipriders to patrol their country's exclusive economic zone aboard Coast Guard vessels and aircraft is part of the 14th Coast Guard District's ongoing Fight for Fish initiative to deter illegal fishing activities. (USCG)



MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority, hereby gives notice that a **Special Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **Thursday, March 1, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.** at the MVA Conference Room San Jose Professional Building Saipan, MP 96950.

MEETING AGENDA

- 1) **Preliminary Matters**
 1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Adoption of Agenda
 4. Adoption of Minutes – January 19, 2012
- 2) **Public Comments**
- 3) **Committee Reports**
 1. Finance
 2. Personnel
- 4) **Old Business**
- 5) **New Business**
 1. Email Poll Ratification
 - a. FY 2013 Budget Request
 - b. Tourism Master Plan
 - c. Reprogramming and Printing of Customs Forms
 2. Off-shore Representative Office
- 6) **Executive Session**
- 7) **Adjournment**

/s/ Marian Aldan-Pierce
Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370
SAIPAN, MP 96950

**Head Start Policy Council
AGENDA**

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Head Start Policy Council hereby gives notice that it will have a Regular meeting on Wednesday, February 29, 2012 at 5:30pm, Tanapag Head Start Resource Center, Saipan.

I. Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Quorum

II. Public Comments

III. Communications

1. From the State Board of Education
2. From the Office of Head Start

- a. Program Specialist: Conference call, January 17 & 30, 2012
 - i. Update staff Qualification Waiver
 - ii. 2013 Triennial Review
- b. Early Childhood Specialist: CLASS Observations and School Readiness Goals

IV. Monthly Reports

1. Managers
2. Director
3. Human Resource Officer

V. Old Business

1. Self Assessment Updates
2. Community Assessment Updates

VI. New Business

1. Red Cross Presentation
2. Parent Activity Funds
3. HSAC Meeting Result
4. March 22, 2012 PSS SW PD
5. Monitoring Protocol

VII. Miscellaneous Matters

VIII. Executive Session

IX. Next Meeting

X. Adjournment

This meeting is open to the public, interested individuals are welcome to attend. Any person(s) requiring special accommodations may contact Ms. Naydine Aguon at (670) 664-3751; several days notice is required.

/s/ Vinnie Sablan
Chairperson

1 Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Feb. 29, 2000

Study says CNMI needs 900 more hotel rooms

A financial analysis conducted by the CNMI's Strategic Economic Development Council has projected that an additional 900 hotel rooms will be needed to make up for the expected lost in revenues as a result of the projected decline in the garment industry. The Council, composed of executives from local and regional banks, hotels, airlines, retailers, and travel agents, aims to create a coordinated long-term vision for the future growth of the Northern Marianas. Business leaders have been meeting to discuss ways on how to diversify and strengthen the local economy with the expected pull out of garment manufacturers with the implementation of world trade agreements scheduled to take effect in the year 2005.

DOC supports plans to boost agriculture sector

The Department of Commerce is backing a move by the CNMI Legislature to remove restrictions in the overly protected local agriculture sector, in fresh effort to revitalize existing industries in the Northern Marianas. Commerce Secretary Frankie Villanueva is particularly in support of proposals to reduce minimum investment threshold for commercial farming and fishing from \$2 million to \$200,000. Mr. Villanueva said the proposed reduction, offered by a pending legislation introduced by House Speaker Ben Fitial, is more reasonable than the current level which has been considered too restrictive.

Feb. 29, 2004

CNMI renews its push for delegate seat

The House Resources Committee heard testimony Thursday on a longstanding issue for the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands—the creation of a non-voting delegate's position to represent the CNMI's interests in Congress. Unlike Guam and other territories with non-voting delegates, the CNMI currently has a "resident representative" in the nation's capital—Pete A. Tenorio—with no authority to work in Congress at any level. The resident representative serves as more of a lobbyist, writing letters and talking to policy-makers, said Tenorio. "I don't have any opportunity at all to be able to influence legislation," Tenorio said. "We are revisiting it because we feel the Northern Marianas ... deserve to have the same right of representation."

Passenger fee assures FAA-funded projects

The proposed collection of passenger fees at all CNMI airports would secure the needed 10-percent matching fund for all airport Improvement projects that are funded by the Federal Aviation Administration, according to executive director Carlos H. Salas of Commonwealth Ports Authority. He said the proposed fee—also called the Passenger Facility Charge—would assure the FAA that the CNMI can put up the needed 10-percent share in the AIP. The AIP funds are usually given to airports across the United States 18 months before the projects take place.

Feb. 29, 2008

Cap minimum wage at \$4.05 for 2 years'

Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio is skeptical that the U.S. Congress can pass a law to stop the next increase to the minimum wage by May 25. As a compromise, he suggests that Congress pass a law capping the minimum wage in the CNMI at \$4.05 an hour, the wage expected after the implementation of the second increase, and allow it to remain in effect for two years. Tenorio, in the testimony he prepared for the U.S. Senate hearing in Thursday evening, says this will provide workers with a total increase of a dollar an hour, "which is a significant step toward a livable wage." He expresses hope that the two-year break would provide time for needed data to be collected on the impact of the implemented and future wage hikes.

AMIM turns attention to Guam military buildup

The Association of Marianas Islands Mayors, Vice Mayors and Municipal Council members held the first session of its 15th general assembly yesterday at the Seaside Hall of the Saipan Grand Hotel. The AMIM meets annually to share resources and ideas and discuss issues pertaining to their islands. Barrigada Mayor Jessie Palican, who is the 2007 AMIM vice president, said the group will also talk about the socio-economic impacts that the islands are facing right now. The main topic in yesterday's general assembly was to form a discussion on the impending military buildup in the Pacific region. However, the guest speakers were not able to make it to yesterday's gathering.

4th Annual A Walk to Remember

PHOTOS BY
CLARISSA V. DAVID



Participants in the 4th Annual "A Walk to Remember," which honors former Tan Holdings executive John "JP" Pangelinan, pose for a group photo after finishing the walk that started at the pavilion across from JP Center along Beach Road in Garapan up to Susupe Beach Park last Saturday morning.



Northern Marianas Badminton Association's Malou Mendoza, Shirley Kim, Merlie Savellano, Babes Cielo, and Roger Vales smile for the camera as they stroll along the Beach Road pathway.



Members of the Northern Marianas Badminton Association pose for a souvenir photo by the banner at Susupe Beach Park.



Tan Holdings employees man the registration booth.



Donuts and coffee keep the Tan Holdings employees awake for the early morning walk on a weekend.



Nimfa Tan, Linda Ang, and Ramir Belialba take a break from giving out water to walkers at the first refreshments booth.



Malou Jardinero, Rose Lazaro, Connie Concepcion, and Anne Navarette take it easy as they wait for walkers at the second refreshments booth.



Roger Vales, Shirley Kim, Lani Santos, and Cristy Villaflor arrive at the registration booth.

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The hottest US trend: Single moms

If motherhood before marriage is the new norm for U.S. women under age 30, it's urgent to find out why.

Politicians railing against the decline of family values won't be much help. Evidence suggests that money rather than morality underlies this troubling trend. We need to find out the root causes to decide how to deal with it.

More than half of babies born to U.S. women younger than 30 occur outside marriage, according to a New York Times report. But the trend is dramatically different based on education levels: 92 percent of women with college degrees are married when they have a baby, compared to 43 percent of those with a high school diploma or less. The fastest growth was among young white women.

Babies born to single mothers are more likely to grow up in poverty, founder in school and have emotional or behavioral problems. If we don't catch these problems before they start, society will pay a much higher economic and social cost down the road.

Most young women say they'd like to marry—if they could find the right man. About eight in 10 unmarried new mothers say they hope to marry their children's father some day, but fewer than one in seven has done so by the time their kids turn 3, according to sociologists Kathryn Edin and Maria Kefalas, authors of the book "Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage."

So what gets in the way?

The sexual revolution is a convenient whipping boy for political demagogues, who say the fact that young women don't need men to support their babies has been the ruination of family values. If that were the case, college-educated women with higher incomes would be more likely to give birth without marrying than less educated women. And that's not the picture.

Edin and Kefalas found that women in their 20s don't want to rush into a wedding that's likely to end in divorce. And when they take a good look at their babies' fathers, they don't always see Mr. Right.

The elephant in the room is the economic predicament of today's young men who are not college-educated. They face a much trickier job market and unstable financial future than they used to. Entry-level wages for men who finish high school have fallen 23 percent since 1973, adjusted for inflation. Some of the sharpest drops in married two-parent families are in places such as Loraine, Ohio, since the steel mills closed.

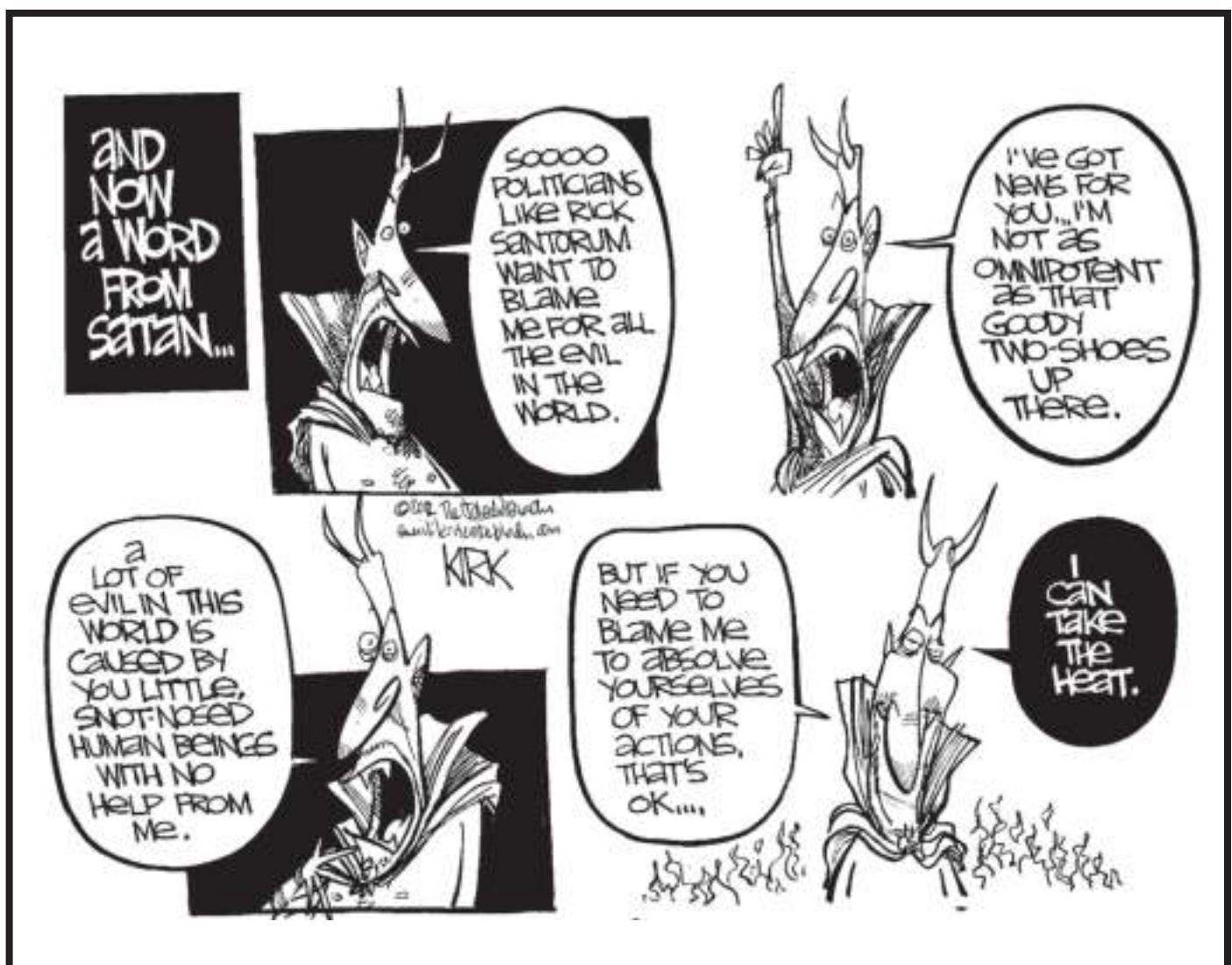
Funny how lack of money and an uncertain future can change your point of view—or others' views of you.

Even if some guys want to do the right thing for their babies, they may be reluctant to make a lifelong commitment to the mothers when they don't know where they'll get their next paycheck. And young women who want to have babies may dodge marriage for similar reasons.

It's tempting to wish we could turn back the clock to the 1950s and make married-with-children the norm. But the '50s weren't paradise either, especially for women trapped in unhappy marriages.

Instead, we need to find ways to improve the economic status of young men to make marriage a more attractive and realistic option.

And we need to deal with a new generation of kids likely to need more help with school and job skills.



Yingkou and Lei Feng

Herman Guerrero, back when we chatted around CNMICH board meetings, once commented that when I write reflections on education, I wear my pedagogical hat 'cause I use too many three-syllable words, forcing interested readers to grab the thick book, training folks to check their seldom used dictionaries!

We mean to point beyond the dictionary today to the atlas. Maps papered my walls at San Vicente Elementary School. Ditto here at the Shenyang Aerospace University. Creatures of the timeline in Western education, relying on the historical process in our thoughts, with the language grammatical tense following the past, present and future, we note that maps do the same with space. Cartographers flourish in the East as historians do in the West. The *feng shui* in China serves as a good example. It captures experience *in situ*, and organizes the same for order, aesthetic, and good fortune.

Now, I am inviting readers to locate Yingkou on the map. Space is the medium of reference in the east, devoid of tense distinction. In Putunghua, "I go" today, yesterday, and tomorrow, is perfectly normal, as "where" is the object of interest, rather than "when," the focus in London and Chicago.

Yingkou is in the province of Liaoning, by the mouth of the *Liaohe* (Liao river) on Dong Bei, the northeast corner of China, about 100 miles from Shenyang. We went there over the weekend after our dream trip to Tahrir Square got canceled, for the warmer weather since the location is advertised as "not hot in the summer, nor cold in the winter; warm in spring and cool in autumn." We did not anticipate the freak snowstorm that is wreaking havoc across a world still on denial about climate change.

Our interest in the magnesium capital of China is in its ancient history, its status in China's industrialization, and its role in the maritime trade of the region.

Yingkou is host to a paleontological find that is reputedly 280,000 years old, though that hardly stirs a ripple among the populace. Archaeological discoveries tend to delight bespectacled archivists in the museum more than the *mi xian* noodle soup slurping taxi drivers eking out subsistence living.

Old Yingkou is at the bend of a delta plain by the river clearly seen as architecturally unsound by urban engineers for high rises. The city expanded outward rather than grow concentrically from downtown. The old location away from the shore made sense when Dong Bei defended itself from marauding *Wokou* (Japanese pirates) that raided Bohai's shores. It became an international port with European architecture after the West humiliated the Qing Dynasty in the Treaty of Tianjin of 1864.

Its post-World War II train station still stands, though rapid traffic is now in its satellite cities. Noticeable to us in Liaohe Square is the old Catholic cathedral still holding Mass for the remaining faithful

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.



led by convent sisters while also running a residential social service for the elderly. The care for China's elderly poses as this decade's internal contradiction.

There are only two trains from Yingkou to Shenyang per day while the new satellite city of Dashiqiao has an on-the-hour-every-hour schedule, including the CH series that traverses the distance between warm Dalian south and icy city of Harbin in the north. Our returning train was from Yingkou to Tumen in Yanbian (Korea in China) reminiscent of the connection when the Korean Goguryo Empire extended to Bohai.

The new housing developments are going vertical like the rest of the urban world. Ironically, it is the capitalist investments in these units that is collectivizing what the horizontally spread agrarian settlements could not thoroughly accomplish, thus a fertile ground for the communist overlay on China's traditional communalism.

Old Yingkou is the administrative center. Downtown real estate did not skyrocket with the city expanding outward so the potential of its remaining a cultural center is high; with the CCP Presidium's current policy shift on things cultural, this could only be an advantage.

We parked ourselves at a hotel a block away from the old rail station, fronted prominently by the statue of the 22-year-old PLA soldier *Lei Feng*, made an icon by Mao Tse Tong in promoting the image of the soldier as an altruistic doer (like the U.S. Seabee) rather than the mean and lean killing machine of recent vintage. In fact, Feng was struck by an electric pole while backing up a vehicle, his selflessness celebrated in his life rather than in his death. In contrast, our Hollywood gung-ho is the grunt beckoning comrades to step over his body flung on the barbwires of Tarawa!

China's soul is in commerce, for better or worse. Chinese villages revolve around their *Nong Mao Shi Chang*, the public market, unfortunately being replaced by the malls of the urban centers. Gives us pause: on the local, what's our Sabalu market story? Further, should we not egg Jerry Tan's Saipan Air to look beyond Japan to Korea, and Yanbian/Dong Bei?

Now, should Herman Jr. (one of my SVES ex-students) be reading this piece, I trust he bothered to reach for the atlas and the dictionary for today's geography and English lessons!

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Adverse impact of federal laws

The manufacture of major regulations so entrenched in Washington is ongoing. Have we done any monitoring to see that the 84 major regulations produced by the Obama administration are returned to Congress for further review?

At issue is the apparent disconnect between national policymakers, the White House, and folk in small-town America. The former has engaged in the approval of laws requiring preparation of major regulations by the latter. These translate into costly application, compliance, and a myriad of fees against small businesses.

We've seen it here when the federalization of immigration and minimum wage went into effect, adversely impacting private industries. The net result was business closure, the ripple effect being reduction in force or joblessness. It instantly displaced and ruined families who relied on their income from private industries for sustenance.

Given annihilating conditions from recent federal impositions, do we really expect gargantuan sets of regulations to encourage expansion and new business startups or wouldn't the reverse be the exacting net effect? What's even more infuriating is the imposition in absentia without the benefit of a long thoughtful process.

So out the window go small businesses that I venture to say employ about a third of employees Marianas-wide. The ultimate effect is the contraction of local revenue generation that now places a focus on whether to impose draconian austerity measure and reduction in force. The loss of nearly \$30 million in revenue is horrendous for a fragile island economy.

Biz across country going after feds

A recent article in the *Washington Times* says that even the Obama administration acknowledges, "regulations affect employment and the economy." Cass Sunstein, the president's regulatory chief, said in the *Washington Post* article that he is "sensitive to the possibility that when there is higher unemployment, there could be a higher risk that people working in regulated industries may have to wait longer to find new jobs."

If private industries aren't reporting regulations as the reason for

layoffs to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, therefore they must not be a problem. Said Don Curtis, "Much of the cost of regulation is concealed in higher prices for products and opportunities that we can't pursue or jobs we can't create because of added regulatory burdens. A study by the Small Business Administration found that small businesses like mine pay more than \$10,000 annually to comply with federal regulations."

Curtis is the owner of Forestry Company and chairman of the Florida chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business, Small Businesses for Sensible Regulations. He added, "Today, there are more than 4,200 new rules and regulations looming in the federal pipeline, 845 of which directly affect small business. For me, this uncertainty is unsustainable and only adds to the economic heartburn created by regulations already on the books." Concluded Curtis, "Let's halt unnecessary regulations and start bringing about regulatory reform. It might just be the best thing that ever happened to the economy."

This is where the CNMI could rally behind private national organizations to rid the country of costly regulations that basically stifle or annihilate economic growth. Like small businesses across the country, small businesses here too need some form of resuscitation and we can begin by working via networking with private groups who see regulations as the single most devastating tools of unelected bureaucrats whose only worry is their biweekly loot.

Equal application of law

Interesting how some local businessmen feel they should receive favors as locals in terms of public land leases. As secretary of DPL, I've had to swallow my fiduciary duty and allow some locals through a needle's hole because the big man upstairs wanted it that way. I went home frustrated that political interference has started creeping in.

Introspectively, how do I deal with other vendors upon their finding out that a certain lessee heavily in arrears was given a chance to continue to use public land? What's this monkey business about "anchor" investors, sir? Aren't other investors equally anchoring the same local economy now sputtering to death?

Harsh school punishments are harming students

We need to stop kicking so many kids out of school. Education reform is back on the front burner, with a recent call by President Obama for Congress to fix problems with the national education law No Child Left Behind. The legislation sets one-size-fits-all standards for student academic achievement that many have criticized as unrealistic and counterproductive. But no education reform will be complete or effective unless it also expels zero-tolerance disciplinary policies that are causing a tsunami of student suspensions.

Every year, public schools order millions of in-school and out-of-school suspensions for misbehaviors that in another era would have merited a trip to the principal's office, at most. Talking out in class or shoving classmates in the hallway today can get your kid a citation from the school for "defiance of authority" or "disorderly conduct"—and a suspension to boot.

California public schools gave nearly 800,000 suspensions last year; Texas schools gave 2 million. In both states, most suspensions were for behaviors that school staff had discretion in punishing, not actions that required mandatory suspension. Florida, New York, Georgia—the story is the same around the country. Student suspensions are at what many education experts consider epidemic levels.

Zero-tolerance student discipline goes hand-in-glove with No

Child Left Behind's inflexible mandates on high-stakes testing and annual achievement levels. These policies have created pressure-cooker conditions for students and teachers.

Cutbacks to education budgets that have slashed teachers and inflated class size have made matters worse, too. Low-achieving students—often those with learning or other disabilities—face higher rates of suspensions as a consequence.

And once suspended, students are likely to experience more suspensions as they get older, increasing their risk of dropping out of school and falling into the juvenile justice system.

That school-to-prison pipeline, as experts are calling it, was outlined in a recent study of Texas' public schools by the Justice Center of the Council of State Governments. The study, called "Breaking Schools' Rules," describes a disciplinary system in which suspensions for minor violations are rampant. More than half of students from seventh to 12th grade were suspended at least once, and 15 percent were suspended 11 or more times. Those students were more likely to repeat a grade and to drop out before graduation. Black students were at greatest risk of suspension and being pushed out, the study found.

What's the alternative to suspending our way to school discipline? Several approaches are working in districts around the nation that have thrown in the towel on zero tolerance.

speculative trading on Wall Street can drive up prices even more."

One of the big Wall Street banks has said that each million barrels of net speculative length adds as much as 10 cents to the price of a barrel of crude oil. But, what does that mean to us when fill our tanks? With a little math, you can determine that the "speculative premium" on oil these days is around \$23 a barrel—and that translates into about an extra 56 cents for a gallon of gas.

I won't bore you with the arithmetic, but that means if you fill up a Honda Civic, the speculative premium costs \$7.39 every time you fill-er-up. If you drive a Ford Explorer or F150, the total is \$10.41 and \$14.56, respectively.

If folks fill up once a week, the Civic owner is putting out \$384.28 more per year, the SUV owner \$541.32 more, and the pickup owner \$757.12 more. So yes, we're talking real money and a real drain on families, businesses and our economic recovery.

There's nothing wrong with speculation. We need speculators to have fully functional financial markets. It's excessive speculation that becomes a problem. When one or two speculators (often big

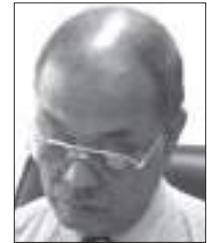
Pump price pain

Here we go again. Gas prices at more than \$4 a gallon in some parts of the country. Unless they don't drive, folks can't escape the pump price pain. Businesses large and small that are dependent upon petroleum feel great pain.

There's no doubt that tensions in the Middle East, particularly in Iran, are a primary reason for rising oil prices. But so are better growth expectations and expected increased demand from countries like India, China and Brazil.

Those expectations make Wall Street speculators salivate. And, why wouldn't they? If it appears they have a good bet that oil futures bought today may be worth more tomorrow and even more in a month, why wouldn't they take that bet? Well, they are—Wall Street oil speculation is on the rise ... again.

As President Obama said just recently, "When uncertainty increases,



By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.

I'm also watching certain so-called land exchange that could end up as land grant. It's a case of getting public land for nothing. And I have every intention to expose this soon. This administration has no respect for the spirit and sanctity of constitutional mandates setting forth the role and functions of DPL. It was this form of corruption muscling in that prompted my decision to resign at the end of my term. Oh, do I have tons of notes on corruption at DPL. Evidently, this should be an interesting chapter in the book I'm scribbling for posterity.



Five bucks is really good biz

I've gone into business establishments if only to feel the pulse of this vital sector. Most are cringing, grinding their teeth and pining for better days. I'm sure they're equally wary that a brighter tomorrow has become as rare as good local mango.

But they stay the course hoping something would break for the better. "If we make five bucks a day it's better than nothing at all." This condition, however, is bad for everybody, employer and employees alike. "There are major obligations we haven't been able to meet these days what with fuel and utility rates draining most everything we make," said one business owner.

"Then there's the unfair business practice on law enforcement fudging in favor of locals as to create a very disgusting uneven playing field," said another. "When a boat operator collects from tourists, is he really reporting such income or do authorities turn the other way?" This mess needs fixing immediately so laws are imposed fairly on everyone!



By ANNETTE FUENTES

The Progressive Media Project

Annette Fuentes is the author of the book Lockdown High: When the Schoolhouse Becomes a Jailhouse. She wrote this for Progressive Media Project, a source of liberal commentary on domestic and international issues; it is affiliated with The Progressive magazine.

A strategy of positive behavior supports, which gives students and teachers skills and resources for resolving behavioral problems, is now official policy in the Los Angeles and Palm Beach County, Fla., public schools. In the Oakland, Calif., and Chicago school districts, restorative justice (which focuses on accountability and repairing wrongdoing) has been adopted by the school boards. Initial reports on progress are encouraging, showing a decrease in suspensions and improved school climates.

Creating safe and secure classrooms for students and teachers without relying on punitive measures is an important ingredient for raising academic achievement. Let's hope Congress and the president get that message when they sit down to map out a new education law in the coming months.



By BART CHILTON

McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Bart Chilton is a commissioner on the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Readers may write to him at: CFTC, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street NW, Washington, D. C. 20581; website: www.cftc.gov.

Wall Street banks) take huge positions, there's bound to be a price impact. That's why speculative position limits are necessary and must be implemented soon.

Over the long term, a national energy policy that includes things like fuel efficiency standards, bio-energy and efforts to produce more domestic energy is also needed. For today though, limiting excessive Wall Street speculation won't take us back to the days of \$1.00 gas, but it will help limit the pump price pain.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph with gusts to 35 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲ 85° ▼ 75°	▲ 85° ▼ 75°	▲ 85° ▼ 75°	▲ 86° ▼ 75°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota Thundershowers	▲ 86 ▼ 78
Palau Thunderstorms	▲ 86 ▼ 78
Yap Showers	▲ 89 ▼ 78
Chuuk Shower	▲ 89 ▼ 79
Pohnpei Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Kosrae Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Majuro Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 78

Around The Globe

Auckland Rain	▲ 71 ▼ 68
Beijing Showers	▲ 44 ▼ 27
Hong Kong Showers	▲ 68 ▼ 63
Honolulu Showers	▲ 79 ▼ 71
London Partly Cloudy	▲ 60 ▼ 45
Los Angeles Sunny	▲ 59 ▼ 46
Manila Partly Cloudy	▲ 88 ▼ 79
Melbourne Partly Cloudy	▲ 72 ▼ 60
Miami Partly Cloudy	▲ 83 ▼ 69
New York Rain	▲ 43 ▼ 42
Osaka Showers	▲ 55 ▼ 44
Paris Mostly Cloudy	▲ 56 ▼ 47
Pusan Showers	▲ 51 ▼ 43
Rome Sunny	▲ 68 ▼ 46
Salem Rain	▲ 44 ▼ 34
San Francisco Rain	▲ 55 ▼ 47
Seoul Mostly Cloudy	▲ 49 ▼ 32
Tokyo Cloudy	▲ 56 ▼ 40
Washington, DC Rain	▲ 52 ▼ 51

Tides

Sunrise/Sunset

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:35 AM	6:24 PM	Today	11:06 AM
Thursday	6:34 AM	6:25 PM	Thursday	11:53 AM 12:20 AM
Friday	6:34 AM	6:25 PM	Friday	12:44 PM 1:10 AM
Saturday	6:33 AM	6:25 PM	Saturday	1:36 PM 2:00 AM
Sunday	6:32 AM	6:25 PM	Sunday	2:30 PM 2:49 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

■ ISLAND SNAPSHOT

Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

■ BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

■ BUSINESS

Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

■ SAMUT SARI

Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

■ TRAVELOGUE

Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan

To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5

SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)

C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

C05064 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP
C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily
C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7
C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05079 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6
C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily
DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7
DL297 4:25pm 7:15pm Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1
OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX
OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7
DL581 4:10am 7:30am 1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN
OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT
C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM
C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM
C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM
C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN
C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN
OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05076/147 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN
C0604/749 3:20pm 10:50pm Daily via ICN

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN
OZ750/603 1:00am 2:20pm Daily via ICN
OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN
OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; C2: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100							

Business

Proview seeks to regain global rights to iPad name

SHANGHAI (AP)—Proview Electronics says it is now seeking to regain worldwide rights to the iPad name and is suing Apple Inc. for alleged fraud and unfair competition, hoping to have a 2009 sale of the trademark ruled void.

The Taiwan-based maker of LED lights said in a release late Monday that it had amended its lawsuit filed earlier this month in Santa Clara, California's Superior Court.

Apart from having the trademark sale voided, it also is seeking unspecified compensation, a share of Apple's profits from alleged "unfair competition" and an order for Apple to stop using the trademarks.

Apple had no immediate comment.

Proview insists it owns the rights to the iPad trademark in mainland China. A Shanghai court last week rejected its demand for an injunction preventing Apple from selling the iPad.

It also postponed hearing



A customer tries out Apple's iPad 2 at a retail shop in Chongqing, China, Monday, Feb. 27, 2012. AP

the case pending a decision by a court in southern China's Guangdong Province, where Proview's mainland Chinese factory is based. The Guang-

dong High Court is due to convene Wednesday for an appeal by Apple of a lower court judgment against the U.S. company's claim to the trademark.

It is unclear if Proview's latest legal maneuver is driven by the

expectation of a favorable ruling by the Guangdong High Court or by its desire to push Apple for an out-of-court settlement—an option Proview's lawyers have said would be possible.

Apple has given no sign it would be willing to settle. It contends Proview failed to transfer ownership of the mainland Chinese iPad trademark as agreed in the 2009 deal.

Ma Dongxiao, a lawyer who is representing Proview in China but is not involved in the U.S. case, said Tuesday the dispute in China centers only on ownership and infringement of the iPad trademark, not on the validity of the 2009 deal.

In its release, Proview said its amended complaint in the U.S. case is meant to provide details of Apple's alleged "fraudulent actions."

"Among the many allegations in the U.S. complaint are fraud by intentional misrepresentation, fraud by concealment, fraudulent inducement, and unfair competition," Proview said.

If the 2009 deal is ruled void, iPad trademarks for the European Union, South Korea, Mexico, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam would revert back to Proview Taiwan, it said.

Proview, once a major computer monitor manufacturer,

launched its own version of iPad, or Internet Personal Access Device, in 2000 but it was not a market hit. Apple launched its popular iPad in 2010.

Proview contends Apple intentionally misled it when it bought iPad trademarks through a special purpose company called IP Application Development Ltd. that concealed it was acting on Apple's behalf.

Experts in the high-tech field say such tactics are common given the secrecy surrounding new product launches, especially Apple's.

But Proview says IP Application Development told it that it wanted the trademark because it was an abbreviation of its name.

"While some technology companies create special purpose vehicles in order to obtain trademarks, in this case the sole function of Apple's special purpose vehicle was intentional misrepresentation, and an effort to fraudulently induce Proview Taiwan into a sale of the IPAD trademarks," Cal Kenney, a spokesman for Proview, said in the release.

German lawmakers approve new Greek bailout

BERLIN (AP)—The German parliament approved a second, euro130 billion (\$173 billion) loan package for Greece on Monday after Chancellor Angela Merkel warned lawmakers that it would be irresponsible to abandon the country to bankruptcy.

Although the motion was always expected to be easily approved—the final tally Monday was 496-90 with five abstentions—the idea of bailing out Greece has remained very unpopular in Germany, Europe's biggest economy, among the public and many politicians.

"The road that lies in front of Greece is long and truly not without risk," Merkel told lawmakers before the vote. "That also goes for the success of the new pro-

gram—no one can give a 100 percent guarantee of success."

Earlier Monday, the mass-circulation Bild daily, which has always taken a very hard line on Greece, plastered the word "STOP!" over its front page. Its message to lawmakers was: "Don't keep on going the wrong way."

Merkel, however, said it would be irresponsible to risk a Greek bankruptcy.

She acknowledged that some people ask "whether Greece isn't a bottomless pit, a hopeless case, whether it wouldn't be better for all if Greece reintroduced the drachma."

But she insisted that "the opportunities outweigh the risks of turning away from Greece now—

I believe these risks are incalculable and therefore irresponsible."

"As chancellor of Germany, I should and sometimes must take risks, but I cannot embark on adventures," Merkel said.

Ratings agency Standard & Poor's late Monday downgraded Greece's credit rating to "selective default" because of steps the country took last week to force its bond holders to accept steep losses.

The rescue package is Greece's second in less than two years and also involves private-sector investors accepting total losses of more than 70 percent on the bonds they hold, along with tough new austerity measures.

Greece has been surviving since May 2010 on an initial

euro110 billion (\$148 billion) package of rescue loans from other eurozone countries and the International Monetary Fund.

But more than two years of harsh austerity implemented to secure the rescue funds have left the economy in freefall, with businesses closing in the tens of thousands and unemployment at a record high 21 percent in November.

It isn't yet clear exactly what Germany's share of the new bailout will be, and the IMF's input this time has yet to be determined. But Merkel said "it is indispensable for the German government that the IMF continue to make a significant contribution and provide its experience and expertise."

World Bank protest highlights China reform tension

BEIJING (AP)—A protester briefly disrupted a news conference by World Bank president Robert Zoellick on Tuesday, highlighting tensions over the bank's recommendation for Beijing to reduce the dominance of state industry and promote free markets.

Zoellick had just begun speaking at the event in the bank's Beijing office when a Chinese man in a pinstriped business suit stood up and shouted slogans including, "State-owned industry should not be privatized!" He handed

out leaflets criticizing the proposed changes before bank staff ushered him out.

After the man left, Zoellick said the changes proposed in a report Monday by the bank and a Chinese Cabinet think tank have provoked "intense debate in China." He said that was "the point of any good research report."

The report calls for China to adopt a new economic strategy after three decades of rapid growth that was driven by exports and investment. They include opening markets further and reducing

the dominance of state companies that control industries from energy to banking—changes that Zoellick acknowledged will likely provoke opposition.

"Will some of the vested interests that benefit from the current structure resist? I suspect they will," he said. "But the Chinese leadership's interests are that of all the Chinese people, not just specific groups."

The protester identified himself as Du Jianguo and said he was independent scholar of politics and economics. His

leaflet—titled "World Bank, Take Your Poison and Go Back to the United States"—complains the policy changes urged by the bank for China have hurt the public in Latin America and elsewhere.

"The World Bank report won't give any benefit to the Chinese economy and people," Du said at the news conference, after apologizing to Zoellick for the disruption. "We have no reason to accept their poison. After they ruin China, they will ruin the whole world."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

BankGuam Holding declares first quarter dividends

HAGATNA, Guam—The Board of Directors of BankGuam Holding Company at their regular meeting held Feb. 28, 2012 authorized the payment of common stock dividends for the first quarter ending March 30, 2012, at \$1.1250 per share. The first quarter payment of the regular dividends will be for common stock shareholders of record as of March 15, 2012. Such dividends will be paid on the quarter ending March 30, 2012. For more information, contact William D. Leon Guerrero at (671) 472-5273. (BOG)

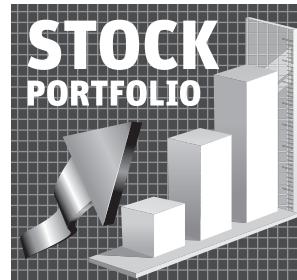
UK says bank tried to avoid \$800 million in tax

LONDON (AP)—Britain has ordered a bank to pay half a billion pounds (\$800 million) in unpaid tax that it tried to avoid by exploiting regulatory loopholes, a government minister said Monday. Exchequer Secretary David Gauke said the bank had sought to use an "aggressive" avoidance scheme to dodge corporation tax on profit made buying back its own debt.

It also carried out a scheme to seek "repayment" from the government of tax it had never paid. Gauke said both practices were "wholly unacceptable, against the intentions of Parliament and the spirit of the law." The government did not name the bank, but the Financial Times, the Daily Telegraph and the Times of London newspapers identified it as Barclays PLC. Barclays could not immediately be reached for comment.

Argentine leader hints at renationalizing trains

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP)—Argentine President Cristina Fernandez urged investigators Monday to determine responsibility for last week's deadly train crash soon, and hinted she may move toward renationalizing railways. Fernandez also took on those who criticized her for waiting five days to comment publicly on the tragedy that killed 51 people and injured more than 700 in Argentina's capital. Saying she knows death and pain intimately, she said no one should expect her to offer simplistic solutions or pose for photographs with survivors.



LEADING INDICATORS

DOW

12,981.50
-1.44
-0.01%

S&P

1,367.59
1.85
0.14%

NASDAQ

2,966.16
2.41
0.08%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	0.9273
British Pound	0.6311
Canadian Dollar	0.9957
Chinese Yuan	6.2993
Euro	0.7439

Hong Kong Dollar 7.7548

Indian Rupee 49.1550

Indonesian Rupiah 9,148.00

Japanese Yen 80.5270

Malaysian Ringgit 3.0110

New Zealand Dollar 1.1888

Philippine Peso 42.8200

Singapore Dollar 1.2529

South Korean Won 1,124.30

Swiss Franc 0.8968

Taiwan Dollar 29.5920

Thailand Baht 30.3900

Nation

1 dead, 4 wounded in Ohio high school shooting

CHARDON, Ohio (AP)—A teenager opened fire in the cafeteria at a suburban Cleveland high school Monday, killing one student and wounding four others before he was chased from the building by a teacher and captured a short distance away, authorities said.

A student who saw the attack up close said it appeared that the gunman targeted a group of students sitting together and that the one who was killed was gunned down while trying to duck under the cafeteria table.

FBI officials would not comment on a motive. And Police Chief Tim McKenna said authorities "have a lot of homework to do yet" in their investigation of the shooting, which sent students screaming through the halls at the start of the school day at 1,100-student Chardon High.

An education official said the suspected shooter is a Lake Academy student, not a student at Chardon High. Brian Bontempo declined to answer any questions about the student. Bontempo is the superintendent of the Lake County Educational



AP
People are evacuated from Chardon High School in Chardon, Ohio, about 30 miles east of Cleveland, after a number of students were shot there at the beginning of the school day Monday, Feb. 27, 2012.

Service Center, which operates the academy.

The alternative school in Wilmot serves 7th through 12th grades. Students may have been referred to the school because of academic or behavioral problems.

The suspect's name has not been released because he is a juvenile. The FBI said he was

arrested near his car a half-mile from Chardon. He was not immediately charged.

Teachers locked down their classrooms as they had been trained to do during drills, and students took cover as they waited for the all-clear in this town of 5,100 people 30 miles from Cleveland. One teacher

was said to have dragged a wounded student into his classroom for protection. Another chased the gunman out of the building, police said.

Fifteen-year-old Danny Komertz, who witnessed the shooting, said the gunman was known as an outcast who had apparently been bullied. But

other students disputed that.

"Even though he was quiet, he still had friends," said Tyler Lillash, 16. "He was not bullied."

Long before official word came of the attack, parents learned of the bloodshed from students via text message and cellphone and thronged the streets around the school, anxiously awaiting word on their children.

Two of the wounded were listed in critical condition, and another was in serious condition.

"I looked up and this kid was pointing a gun about 10 feet away from me to a group of four kids sitting at a table," Komertz said. He said the gunman fired two shots quickly, and students scrambled for safety. One of them was "trying to get underneath the table, trying to hide, protecting his face."

The slain student, Daniel Parmertor, was an aspiring computer repairman who was waiting in the cafeteria for the bus for his daily 15-minute ride to a vocational school. His teacher at the Auburn Career School had no idea why Parmertor, "a very good young man, very quiet,"



had been targeted, said Auburn superintendent Maggie Lynch.

Officers investigating the shooting blocked off a road in a heavily wooded area several miles from the school. Federal agents patrolled the muddy driveway leading to several spacious homes and ponds, while other officers walked a snowy hillside. A police dog was brought in. It wasn't clear what they were looking for.

Obama gains with women: Jobs, social issues help

WASHINGTON (AP)—It's looking like President Barack Obama may be back in the good graces of women.

His support dropped among this critical constituency just before the new year began and the presidential campaign got under way in earnest. But his standing with female voters is strengthening, polls show, as the economy improves and social issues, including birth control, become a bigger part of the nation's political discourse.

"Republicans are making a big mistake with this contraception talk, and I'm pretty sure that they are giving (the election) to Obama," says Patricia Spreyer, 87, of McComb, Miss., a GOP-leaning indepen-

dent. "It's a stupid thing."

The recent furor over whether religious employers should be forced to pay for their workers' contraception is certainly a factor but hardly the only reason for women warming up to Obama again after turning away from him late last year.

An Associated Press-GfK poll suggests women also are giving the president more credit than men are for the country's economic turnaround.

Among women, his approval ratings on handling the economy and unemployment have jumped by 10 percentage points since December. Back then, a wide swath of Americans expressed anxiety over

the nation's slow climb out of recession and anger at a government that couldn't agree on steps to speed things up.

Since then, the unemployment rate has kept declining, and Obama hasn't been shy about trumpeting it, and analysts say that drop may have resonated particularly with women.

For Obama, there is no more crucial constituency than women. They make up a majority of voters in presidential elections, and a bit more of them identify with his party.

He would not be president today without topping Republican John McCain in that group in 2008. And Republicans would need to win a sizable share—more than about 40

percent—of female voters to beat him.

Though the economy remains the top concern among both women and men, an array of social issues—gay marriage, access to birth control and whether cancer research should be kept separate from the issue of abortion—have returned to the nation's political conversation since December. And both parties have snapped up those issues to awaken their staunchest supporters.

Republicans from Capitol Hill to the presidential campaign trail focused particularly on a requirement in Obama's health care law for some religious employers to pay for birth control. Obama then ad-

justed that policy by instead directing insurance companies to pay for birth control—and Democrats are running with a message that Republicans want to upend long-established rights for women.

"Women are used to making

More Americans seeking dental treatment at the ER

CHICAGO (AP)—More Americans are turning to the emergency room for routine dental problems—a choice that often costs 10 times more than preventive care

and offers far fewer treatment options than a dentist's office, according to an analysis of government data and dental research.

Most of those emergency visits involve trouble such as toothaches that could have been avoided with regular checkups but went untreated, in many cases because of a shortage of dentists, particularly those willing to treat Medicaid patients, the analysis said.

The number of ER visits nationwide for dental problems increased 16 percent from 2006 to 2009, and the report released Tuesday by the Pew Center on the States suggests the trend is continuing.

In Florida, for example, there were more than 115,000 ER dental visits in 2010, resulting in more than \$88 million in charges. That included more than 40,000 Medicaid patients, a 40 percent increase from 2008.

Many ER dental visits involve the same patients seeking

NYPD head not sorry about NJ Muslim surveillance

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Police Department's top official reiterated his defense Monday of the department's aggressive intelligence-gathering operations, saying there's no need to apologize for keeping tabs on some Muslims if that's what it takes to protect the city.

"Not everybody is going to be happy with everything the police department does, that's the nature of our business," Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said. "But our primary mission, our primary goal, is to keep this city safe, to save lives. That's what we're engaged in doing."

Kelly's comments to reporters Monday were the latest in a recent string of public statements in response to reports by The Associated Press about the NYPD's surveillance on Muslims across the Northeast following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

On a radio show on WOR, Kelly said some local politicians and potential candidates to succeed Mayor Michael Bloomberg who have criticized the counterterrorism efforts were pandering because of the upcoming election season.

In a newspaper column in the New York Daily News, Kelly said the criticism was a knee-jerk reaction by some

New Jersey lawmakers to news that the NYPD had done surveillance in Newark.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez and Newark Mayor Cory Booker were wrong to question the department, he said. The elected officials were responding to the recent disclosure that officers devoted several months in 2007 to surveillance of Muslim communities in New Jersey's largest city. The result was a 60-page guide to Newark's Muslims, which was obtained by The Associated Press.

Kelly said he had no plans to apologize. Christie has called

the report "disturbing" and his spokesman said Monday he had nothing to add. A spokeswoman for Booker said he wasn't available for comment Monday. A spokeswoman for Menendez did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Both have called for investigations into the department's actions.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said he didn't see any reason to second-guess the NYPD's methods. He was responding in Albany to a letter sent by a civil rights group demanding a meeting to discuss the attorney general's decision not to investigate the department.

decisions and running their lives," said Linda Young, president of the National Women's Political Caucus, which favors abortion rights. "To hear their right to contraception questioned in 2012 is shocking, and it's gotten a lot of people's attention."

additional care. In Minnesota, nearly 20 percent of all dental-related ER visits are return trips, the analysis said.

That's because emergency rooms generally are not staffed by dentists. They can offer pain relief and medicine for infected gums but not much more for dental patients. And many patients are unable to find or afford follow-up treatment, so they end up back in the emergency room.

"Emergency rooms are really the canary in the coal mine. If people are showing up in the ER for dental care, then we've got big holes in the delivery of care," said Shelly Gehshan, director of Pew's children's dental campaign. "It's just like pouring money down a hole."

"It's the wrong service, in the wrong setting, at the wrong time," she said.

The center in Washington, D.C., is a division of the nonprofit Pew Charitable Trusts.

Pew researchers analyzed hospital information from 24 states, data from the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and studies on dental care.

Asia

US: Afghanistan turmoil won't change US war plan

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Obama administration is sticking determinedly to its stay-the-course message in Afghanistan despite a week of anti-American riots, the point-blank killing of U.S. military advisers and growing election-year demands to bring the troops home.

In an echo of the Bush administration on continuing the unpopular war in Iraq, the White House and Pentagon insisted Monday that the wave of violence against Americans will not derail the war strategy in Afghanistan or speed up the calendar for bringing American forces home.

"We work alongside thousands of Afghans every single day to ensure a better future for the Afghan people. And nothing that has happened over the past week is going to deter us from that goal," Pentagon spokesman George Little said. "We're making progress. We have put the enemy on its heels in many parts of the country."

Administration spokesmen were at pains to answer the larger question of whether to keep fighting a war that has lost support not only in the United States but also among the people the U.S. has pledged to protect. The perception that Afghans are ungrateful for U.S. sacrifice and are turning on their American advisers complicates President Barack Obama's



Pakistani protesters stand on a representation of the U.S. flag holding a banner that reads "we condemn," to condemn the reported burning of Qurans in Afghanistan by U.S. troops, in Lahore, Pakistan, on Monday, Feb 27, 2012.

plan to ease out of combat against Taliban extremists over the next two years.

Under current strategy, tens of thousands of U.S. forces will remain in Afghanistan at least through the end of this year and Afghan forces would have full control of the country's security by the end of 2014. Both Democrats and Republicans have said the timetable should move up.

White House spokesman Jay Carney said the violence will

not mean faster troop withdrawal. He pointed to Obama's rationale for expanding the war early in his presidency.

"The No. 1 priority, the reason why U.S. troops are in Afghanistan in the first place, is to disrupt, dismantle and ultimately, ultimately defeat al-Qaida," Carney said.

Administration officials said they believe Afghan President Hamid Karzai's fragile government could collapse and the

Taliban would regain power if the U.S. were to walk away. Their argument recalls the Bush administration insistence at the height of violence in Iraq that the war was in U.S. national security interests and that abandoning a commitment to stabilize the country would squander painful U.S. sacrifices.

But even in Iraq, cases of supposedly friendly forces turning their guns on American troops were very rare.

As with Iraq, voters in the U.S. are questioning the wisdom of a long-running conflict they once largely supported. This time, with the U.S. election campaign well under way, discontent with the war in Afghanistan is compounded by its high monetary cost at a time of tightening budgets.

A Pew Research Center poll indicates that more than half, 56 percent, of Americans want troops removed from Afghanistan as soon as possible, while just 38 percent believe the U.S. should stay until Afghanistan is stabilized. The poll was taken just before Obama's State of the Union address in late January.

Democratic Senate Whip Dick Durbin, D-Ill., said Monday the United States should move faster to bring forces home now.

"The sooner the better," Durbin said on MSNBC. "The president is right to start bringing the troops home. I would say to him: Do it more quickly."

Although a military spokesman said protests over the mistaken U.S. burning of Muslim religious material are ebbing, the depth of anger at U.S. forces was evident in a suicide bombing at one base and the possible attempted poisoning of American soldiers by a kitchen worker at another.

A single working woman aged 25, Zia is unusual in this conservative region where girls are often married off soon after puberty.

Quick to smile, she gently draws out the kids' accounts of what they have endured. She brings stuffed animals to the school, and even the older boys cling to them. She gave the sexually assaulted boy a furry lion-shaped hat which he rarely takes off except for prayers.

A while ago that child's mother was found, but she would not take him back. "She didn't want me," he muttered, almost inaudibly "She said I was garbage."

and establishes mechanisms to monitor progress on the steps the government is taking on accountability."

Writing in Britain's Guardian newspaper on Monday the leaders also called on the council to establish an independent investigation if Sri Lanka does not make sufficient progress in creating a credible accountability process.

The head of Sri Lanka's delegation to the U.N. Human Rights Council, Mahinda Samarsinghe, said his country needed time and space to conduct its own investigations, rejecting any suggestion of outside involvement in the effort to hold alleged war crimes perpetrators to account.

ASIAN BRIEFS

9 Afghans killed in blast outside NATO base

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide car bomber rammed his vehicle into the gates of a NATO base and airport in eastern Afghanistan on Monday, triggering a blast that killed nine Afghans, officials said. The Taliban claimed the attack was revenge for U.S. troops burning copies of the Quran. The bombing in the city of Jalalabad follows six days of deadly protests in the country over the disposal of Qurans and other Islamic texts in a burn pit last week at a U.S. military base north of Kabul.

American officials have called the disposal of the books a mistake and have issued a series of apologies. Afghan President Hamid Karzai has urged calm, calling on his countrymen not to allow insurgents to capitalize on their indignation to spark violence.

Manila seeks oil investors despite China's protest

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines has proceeded to invite foreign investors to explore for fuel deposits in two offshore areas near the South China Sea despite a protest from China, which also claims the territory. Energy Secretary Jose Almendras says the areas northwest of Palawan island are in Philippine territory and are two of 15 areas nationwide being offered to foreign investors for oil and gas exploration. The Chinese Embassy last year protested the plans to invite foreign companies to explore in the two areas, saying they're part of the South China Sea region that falls under its sovereignty.

China investigating hepatitis C outbreak in south

BEIJING (AP)—China says it is sending medical experts to investigate an outbreak of hepatitis C among more than 200 people in the southern province of Guangdong. Ministry of Health spokesman Deng Haihua said Monday that mistakes in medical procedures may have caused the infections in the province's Zijin county. Deng said strengthened preventative measures were ordered at clinics and hospitals in the area to prevent the further spread of the virus.

Pakistan school strives to beat the Taliban trap

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—The boy was 2 when his mother dumped him on the streets, 4 when he spent his first night in a tiny prison cell, being sexually assaulted by an older inmate. Prostitution for money and shelter followed, then hashish, and glue-sniffing.

Now 10 and gangly, he fidgets and stares at the ground, speaking in a near-whisper. "I'm ashamed," he says.

Yet in this rugged frontier city in northwest Pakistan, where people carry guns as casually as they would a daily newspaper,

this boy has hope. He has found refuge in what for Pakistan is relatively rare: a charity-run boarding school for homeless, drug-addicted children.

Around Peshawar, heroin sells for less than \$0.20 a high. "It's the cheapest place in the world to get heroin," says Mazahar Ali, the school's manager. He gestures beyond the school's high walls. Heroin and just about every other vice are just a short walk away, he says.

The drugs all come from nearby Afghanistan which, according to a 2011 U.N. report,

provides 90 percent of the world's opium, from which heroin is made.

For Pakistan, the result is more than 4 million addicts. Some of the youngest end up in mud-walled rooms being drilled in extreme Muslim doctrine by the Taliban who roam relatively freely in Peshawar.

"Sometimes the militants take these children to North Waziristan and teach them to be suicide bombers and sometimes they give the children drugs and the child might not even know that he is going to be blown up,"

says Ali.

At the school, a boy named Osama told of memorizing the Quran, Islam's holy book, while the Taliban hovered over him. He said he was tortured. He escaped, and a month ago was found sleeping on the floor of a ramshackle hotel, said Ummaima Zia, the school psychologist.

On the lawn in front of the four-story school, Osama sat cross-legged on a chair in the afternoon sun, his small body swaying as he recited Quranic verses to his fellow students in a lilting voice.

Sri Lankans protest proposed UN rights resolution

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Thousands of people joined government-backed protests across Sri Lanka on Monday against a proposed U.N. Human Rights Council resolution on alleged rights abuses during the country's civil war.

The protests coincided with the beginning of the council's four-week session in Geneva.

Cabinet ministers urged citizens to join the demonstrations, which were planned in 150 cities and towns, according the government's website.

A U.N. panel report earlier concluded there were credible allegations that both the gov-

ernment and the defeated Tamil Tiger rebels committed serious abuses that could amount to war crimes, especially during the last months of the conflict, which ended in May 2009.

The resolution urges Sri Lanka to investigate alleged abuses, but the government says it interferes in the country's internal affairs.

In Colombo, thousands of people, including Cabinet ministers, lawmakers and government supporters, marched across the capital, blocking traffic on main roads for hours.

They shouted slogans, waved national flags and displayed

placards that read "Defeat Geneva conspiracy," "Hands off Sri Lanka," "Let's not lose victory achieved by heroic forces" and "Save Sri Lanka from UNHRC watchdog."

"People have gathered here to give a clear message that they are ready to safeguard this country from the vicious proposals and accusations of Western forces," said Power and Energy Minister Patali Ranawaka.

He said members of the armed forces sacrificed their lives to liberate the country and "it's now high time for us to be grateful to them. People of this country are ready to protect the

World

Source: Israel won't warn US before Iran strike

WASHINGTON (AP)—Israeli officials say they won't warn the U.S. if they decide to launch a pre-emptive strike against Iranian nuclear facilities, according to one U.S. intelligence official familiar with the discussions. The pronouncement, delivered in a series of private, top-level conversations, sets a tense tone ahead of meetings in the coming days at the White House and Capitol Hill.

Israeli officials said that if they eventually decide a strike is necessary, they would keep the Americans in the dark to decrease the likelihood that the U.S. would be held responsible for failing to stop Israel's potential attack. The U.S. has been working with the Israelis for months to persuade them that an attack would be only a temporary setback to Iran's nuclear program.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Ehud Barak delivered the message to a series of top-level U.S. visitors to the country, including the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the White House national security adviser and the director of national intelligence, and top U.S. lawmakers, all trying to close the trust gap between Israel and the U.S. over how to deal with Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Netanyahu delivered the same message to all the Americans who have traveled to Israel for talks, the U.S. official said.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive strategic negotiations.



In this April 8, 2008, file photo released by the Iranian President's Office, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, center, listens to a technician during his visit of the Natanz Uranium Enrichment Facility some 200 miles (322 kilometers) south of the capital Tehran, Iran.

The White House did not respond to requests for comment, and the Pentagon and Office of Director of National Intelligence declined to comment, as did the Israeli Embassy.

Iran claims its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, but the International Atomic Energy Agency has raised alarms that its uranium enrichment program might be a precursor to building nuclear weapons. The U.S. has said it does not know whether the government has decided to weaponize its nuclear material and put it on a missile or other delivery device.

The secret warning is likely to worry U.S. officials and begin

the high level meetings with Israel and the US far apart on how to handle Iran.

But the apparent decision to keep the U.S. in the dark also stems from Israel's frustration with the White House. After a visit by National Security Adviser Tom Donilon in particular, they became convinced the Americans would neither take military action, nor go along with unilateral action by Israel against Iran. The Israelis concluded they would have to conduct a strike unilaterally—a point they are likely to hammer home in a series of meetings over the next two weeks in Washington, the official said.

Barak will meet with top administration and congressional officials during his visit. Netanyahu arrives in Washington for meetings with President Barack Obama next week.

The behind-the-scenes warning belies the publicly united front the two sides have attempted to craft with the shuttle diplomacy to each other's capitals.

"It's unprecedented outreach to Israel to make sure we are working together to develop the plan to deter Iran from developing a nuclear weapon," and to keep them from exporting terrorism, said Maryland Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, the top Democrat on the House intel-

country's political system. It approves a new constitution, which allows for a multiparty system in Syria, which has been ruled by the Baath party since it took power in a coup in 1963. Assad's father, Hafez, took power in another coup in 1970.

It also imposes a limit of two seven-year terms on the president, meaning Assad could remain legally in power through 2028. The U.S. and its allies dismissed the vote as a "farce" meant to justify the regime's bloody crackdown on dissent. Syria's main opposition groups boycotted the vote, and violence elsewhere prevented polling.

Syrian state TV said 89 percent of eligible voters approved the new document, while nine percent rejected it. It put turnout at 57 percent of Syria's 14.9 million eligible voters.

The high death toll reported by the Local Coordination Committees activist group is sure to add to the growing international pressure on Assad to give up power. But so far, his regime has shown no signs that it is ready to leave peacefully.

Syrian officials announced the results of a referendum on a new constitution held Sunday that Syrian authorities lauded as a step toward political reform.

The referendum allows at least in theory for opening the

Mahe. The Costa Allegra lost power on Monday after a fire in its generator room only six weeks after one of its sister ships, the Costa Concordia, hit a reef and capsized off Italy. No one was injured in the fire Monday, but the blaze set the cruise liner

adrift at sea in a region where Somali pirates prey on ships.

Carnival cancels on-shore tour after mass robbery

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Carnival Cruise Lines Inc. says it

is suspending on-shore nature excursions in the Mexican resort of Puerto Vallarta after 22 cruise passengers were robbed on their bus during a tour last week near the coastal city. The city's public safety secretary says hooded attackers inter-

incredibly serious about a strike on their nuclear weapons program," Rogers told CNN on Monday. "It's their calculus that the administration ... is not serious about a real military consequence to Iran moving forward.

"They believe they're going to have to make a decision on their own, given the current posture of the United States," he added.

U.S. intelligence and special operations officials have tried to keep a dialogue going with Israel, despite the high-level impasse, sharing with them options such as allowing Israel to use U.S. bases in the region from which to launch such a strike, as a way to make sure the Israelis give the Americans a heads-up, according to the U.S. official, and a former U.S. official with knowledge of the communications

Report: Russia, Ukraine foiled plot to kill Putin

MOSCOW (AP)—Security forces have foiled a Chechen-linked plot to assassinate Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, state television reported Monday in a broadcast likely to boost support for Putin's bid to regain the presidency.

Other candidates immediately questioned the timing of the report, which comes just days before Sunday's presidential election and as Putin and his United Russia party face unprecedented protests following a scandal-marred parliamentary election in December.

The Communist Party candidate called the assassination report a "cheap trick."

Putin has portrayed himself as a strong protector of Russia's national interests and has counted the victory over Chechen separatist rebels as one of the key achievements of his 12-year rule. The state television report casting Putin as a terrorist target could draw public sympathy and help secure his victory by a wider margin.

The report, which included two televised confessions, said suspects in the assassination plot have been arrested in Ukraine and were linked to a Chechen rebel leader who has claimed responsibility for other terror attacks in Russia.

Putin, who was Russia's president from 2000 to 2008

and has been prime minister since then, is running for a third, now six-year presidential term. He is expected to win easily against four Kremlin-approved challengers, but a wave of protests since December's tainted parliamentary election has undermined his image as a strong, popular leader.

Channel One said the suspects, acting on instructions from Chechen warlord Doku Umarov, were preparing to kill Putin in Moscow immediately after Sunday's election. It said the suspects were arrested in Ukraine's Black Sea port of Odessa after an accidental explosion Jan. 4 while they were trying to manufacture explosives at a rented apartment.

The Ukrainian Security Service said earlier this month it had detained a man sought by Russian authorities on charges of terrorism and two of his accomplices in Odessa on Feb. 4, but said nothing at the time about linked them to an anti-Putin plot.

The agency's spokeswoman, Marina Ostapenko, said Monday the announcement in Moscow only came now because the Russian special service was conducting its own investigation. She confirmed the main suspect was involved in a plot to kill Putin, but didn't elaborate.

Activist group: 144 dead across Syria

BEIRUT (AP)—A Syrian activist group reported Monday that 144 people have been killed across the country, scores of them in the embattled opposition stronghold of Homs by security forces as they tried to flee. A team from the Syrian arm of the Red Cross delivered aid to one of the city's most dangerous neighborhoods after days of trying to reach the area.

The activist group did not say whether all 144 died on Monday or were killed over the past few days. Many of the casualties were believed to be from the rebel-controlled Baba Amr neighborhood of Homs, which the Syrian Arab Red Crescent entered late Monday. Also in the neighborhood are two wounded foreign journalists

along with the bodies of two of their colleagues who were killed last week.

European and American diplomats and aid workers have been trying desperately to find a way to evacuate them, but Red Cross spokeswoman Carla Haddad said late Monday that the Red Crescent had not managed to get them out. She did not know whether the group had stopped trying for the evening.

Homs has emerged as the center of the 11-month-old uprising seeking to oust authoritarian President Bashar Assad and has borne the brunt of his regime's bloody crackdown on dissent. Parts of the city have been surrounded for weeks, making it impossible for rescue workers to reach the wounded

and for families to bring their dead and injured to the hospital.

Reports by numerous activists that more than 60 bodies were brought to the hospital, all of whom appeared to have died in one incident, reflect the spreading carnage.

The high death toll reported by the Local Coordination Committees activist group is sure to add to the growing international pressure on Assad to give up power. But so far, his regime has shown no signs that it is ready to leave peacefully.

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WORLD BRIEFS

French vessel reaches stranded cruise ship

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—A French fishing vessel reached an Italian cruise ship drifting powerless in the Indian Ocean overnight and was towing it to a nearby Seychelles island, the

Seychelles Coast Guard said Tuesday. Seychelles authorities said they are making arrangements to evacuate people to the island of Desroches and then transfer the more than 1,000 passengers and crew members to the main Seychelles island of

Mahe. The Costa Allegra lost power on Monday after a fire in its generator room only six weeks after one of its sister ships, the Costa Concordia, hit a reef and capsized off Italy. No one was injured in the fire Monday, but the blaze set the cruise liner

adrift at sea in a region where Somali pirates prey on ships.

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Carnival

is suspending on-shore nature excursions in the Mexican resort of Puerto Vallarta after 22 cruise passengers were robbed on their bus during a tour last week near the coastal city. The city's public safety secretary says hooded attackers inter-

cepted the bus in the town of El Nogalito. It says no one was injured in the Thursday night incident but the tourists' possessions were taken. A Carnival statement says it has suspended the Puerto Vallarta nature tour until further notice.

Focus

Casinos' anti-compulsive bet programs vary widely

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)—As lost weekends go, this one was a doozy.

The woman and her long-time boyfriend, regular Atlantic City gamblers, lost \$100,000 in two days in early January. She lost her job, and they now owe \$205,000 to five Atlantic City casinos, with no realistic prospects of paying it back.

She picked up the telephone and called her host, John Conklin, Resorts' vice president of player development, whose job it is to keep gamblers happy—and coming back.

"This is more than I can handle," she told him. "I'm in over my head. All of my real estate is underwater. I don't know what I'm going to do."

Conklin was concerned.

"She sounded desperate," he recalled. "I could hear it in her voice."

He gave her the phone number of Arnie Wexler, the former head of New Jersey's Council on Compulsive Gambling and himself a former gambling addict. Wexler helped get the woman and her boyfriend into a program for gambling addicts, promised to help her work out some sort of arrangement with the casinos, and just let her know she was not alone, that there are thousands like her.

Wexler travels the country giving training sessions to casino employees on how to spot potential compulsive gamblers and what to do if they encounter any.

The casino industry's efforts to spot problem gamblers and intervene with them range from intense, hands-on sessions like those Wexler gives, to much more passive efforts like having brochures about where to get help for a gambling addiction available on the casino floor, or handing out pens with the toll-free number of a help line printed on them.

While most casinos have adopted some form of responsible gambling policy, it can be a delicate balance in an industry whose very business model relies on gamblers risking and losing money. The casino industry has two main motivations in dealing with problem gamblers, said Alan Feldman, a vice president at MGM Resorts International, and chairman of the National Center for Responsible Gaming.

"There is a strong belief among many of the casino executives that there is a moral

obligation to do this," he said. "But there's also a strong business reason: Problem gamblers make for lousy customers. By their very nature, they will turn into bad debt.

"For them to hit bottom, they have to cause a lot of pain along the way, to themselves, their families and to companies," he said. "It serves no purpose in any business to have customers who can't pay their bills."

The center developed a training program called Emerge, which has become the standard among casinos belonging to the American Gaming Association, the industry's main trade group. Different casinos use it differently, but the aim is the same: to intervene when there is a problem, Feldman said.

Wexler's advice to the dealers, hosts and player reps at resorts was simple, and borrowed from the homeland security slogan: If you see something, say something.

"You're not clinicians, you're not counselors," he told the workers. "It's not your job to run over to a customer and say, 'Hey buddy, you've got a gambling problem.' But you can kick it upstairs to an officer in your casino and they can intervene and take care of it. Let a supervisor know about it."

There are a few signs dealers and other customer service

The scope of problem-gambling outreach varies widely across the country.

At least 12 states require casinos to adopt and carry out responsible gaming policies as a condition of getting licensed, according to Brian Lehman, a spokesman for the American

crazy wagers, it might be that they're trying to break even. It might be that they're caught up in an addiction. If you see a patron going through mood swings, that could be another indication. Talk to the patron. Maybe suggest a brief timeout. Give them the 1-800-GAMBLER number and let them know there's a place where they can get help."

Of course, that can sometimes require diplomacy worthy of a Washington ambassador. For an employee to suggest that a customer stop gambling, even briefly, requires supportive bosses.

"We feel like we have a moral obligation," said Aaron Gomes, executive vice president of operations at Resorts and the son of former co-owner Dennis Gomes, who died Friday. "We're in the business of entertaining customers. When it stops being entertaining, we want our workers to talk to them and see if there is a problem."

An estimated 2 million to 5 million Americans have some sort of gambling problem. A 1999 study by the National Gambling Impact Study Commission estimated another 15 million are at risk for developing a gambling problem. There are 38 states with some form of casino gambling.

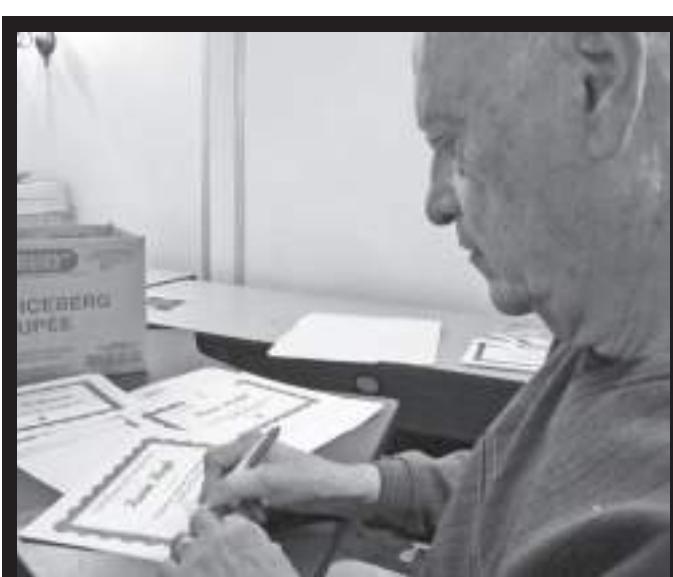
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Financial planner Doyle Brown of Las Vegas finds himself working with problem gamblers who often want to withdraw from their savings for gambling money.

MCT



In this Feb. 13, 2012, photo, Arnie Wexler, former head of New Jersey's Council on Compulsive Gambling, signs certificates for employees of Resorts Casino Hotel in Atlantic City N.J. who completed a training program he runs on compulsive gambling. AP

Gaming Association, the main industry trade group. They include Nevada, Louisiana, Iowa, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Florida, Illinois and New York. New Jersey, however, has no such requirement.

Many states have so-called self-exclusion lists, where gamblers can sign up and require casinos to bar them from the premises either permanently, or for varying periods of time. Many states also assess a charge on casinos to help fund treatment programs for compulsive gamblers.

Michigan, which estimates it has 350,000 residents who are addicted to gambling, places ads for its problem-gambler hotline in church bulletins. The Seminole Indian casinos in Florida, like many others across the nation, put up signs letting customers know where to go for help with a gambling problem, and include that information on players club cards and casino advertising.

A problem gambling task force is being formed near Kansas City, Kan., where a casino

opened Feb. 2. Neighboring Missouri has a self-exclusion list. And authorities in Massachusetts are considering problem gambler prevention and treatment programs as casino gambling draws nearer there.

Arelia Taveras started out as an ambitious lawyer and TV commentator who got to know the staff in Atlantic City casinos, and soon limousines were whisking her to the resort for the high-roller treatment.

But her gambling spun out of control: She said she would go days at a time at the tables, not eating or sleeping, brushing her teeth with disposable wipes so she didn't have to leave the table. She sometimes passed out.

Her total losses amounted to nearly \$1 million, and in 2008, she filed a \$20 million racketeering lawsuit against six Atlantic City casinos, and one in Las Vegas, claiming they had a duty to notice her compulsive gambling problem and cut her off.

Such lawsuits rarely succeed, but they can be costly for casinos to defend, and damaging to their reputation. Taveras'

suit was dismissed, and Taveras served nearly 3 1/2 years in prison for stealing clients' money to finance her gambling. She wishes someone at any of the casinos she frequented—including Resorts—would have taken her aside and tried to talk some sense into her when it was obvious she needed help.

"I'd stay three, four days at the table and have a Snickers bar," she said. "There are people who pee on their seats because they don't want to get up. You mean you don't see that? Come on. They have a duty to us."

In a single weekend in September 2005, she says, she lost \$150,000 gambling at Resorts.

She says the casino asked her to sign a waiver of liability if she wanted to continue gambling there, but she declined. Taveras realizes many people feel she is solely to blame for her own actions. But she said gambling can be every bit as addictive as drugs or alcohol.

"Capitalism is capitalism; I get that," she said. "My issue is that they need to take steps to weed out casualties."

Campus Life

Another job well done by GCA students at forensics contest

Congratulations to all the forensic winners of Grace Christian Academy. Most of the GCA participants in all levels—Primary Grades Forensic Conference for Kinder to 2nd grade and 3rd to 5th grades, National Junior Forensic League for 6th to 8th grades, and National Forensic League for 9th to 12th grades—qualified for the regional competitions in March and April. Well done and congratulations on your success. Below is the list of all February winners.

PRIMARY GRADES FORENSIC CONFERENCE (K-5TH GRADE)

PGFC Coordinator: Esther Manzano

K-2 DIVISION

Dramatic Interpretation B

Lyssa Steele, 2nd Place
Steven Adriatico, 4th Place
Makena Carrasco, 5th Place

Humorous Interpretation B

Aaron Chen, 1st Place
Kenyon Boyer, 2nd Place

Impromptu Speaking A

Kei Lizama, 1st Place
Makena Carrasco, 2nd Place
Clerisse Dacumos, 4th Place
Timothy Neal, 5th Place

Impromptu Speaking B

Jerome Gaspar, 2nd Place
Cristina Kim, 3rd Place
Lyssa Steele, 5th Place



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Grace Christian Academy's February PGFC winners have their picture taken inside the GCA campus.

Impromptu Speaking C

Briston James Jones, 1st Place
James Keaton, 2nd Place
Matthew Gabriel Ernest, 4th Place
Chelsea Henzon, 5th Place

Readers Forum Masters A

Matthew Gabriel Ernest, 3rd Place

Readers Forum Masters D

Cristina Kim, 2nd Place
James Keaton, 4th Place
Jerome Gaspar, 5th Place

Choral Speaking A

Juruel Magtalas, 4th Place
Sara Keaton, 4th Place
Kei Lizama, 4th Place

Micah Mortensen, 4th Place
Akira Daniel Ota, 4th Place

Choral Speaking B

Julia Jinang, 4th Place
Jada Buniag, 4th Place
Andrew Nunez, 4th Place
Kean Pajarillaga, 4th Place

3-5 DIVISION

Duo Interpretation
Tae Yong Kim, 1st Place
Riley Anne Buenaventura, 1st Place
Esther Kim, 2nd Place
Calia Lieto, 2nd Place

Dramatic Interpretation

Esther Kim, 4th Place

Humorous Interpretation

Robert Hanrey Schorr, 3rd Place
Andrei Yue, 5th Place

Readers Forum Masters A

Justin Del Rosario, 1st Place
SheriJean Dela Cruz, 3rd Place

Readers Forum Masters B

Robert Hanrey Schorr, 1st Place
Matt Jason Moran, 3rd Place

Readers Forum Masters C

Justine Calayo, 3rd Place

Impromptu Speaking A

Tae Yong Kim, 5th Place

Impromptu Speaking B

Arvin Dayao, 4th Place
Matt Jason Moran, 5th Place

NATIONAL JUNIOR FORENSIC LEAGUE (6TH, 8TH GRADE)

NJFL Coordinator: Ami Joy Danganan
NFL Coordinator: Josh Zwicker

Duo Interpretation A

Asako Camacho, 3rd Place
Alexa Go, 3rd Place

NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE (9TH, 12TH GRADE)

Duo Interpretation A

Original Oratory A

Glen Paul Florendo, 3rd Place

Impromptu Speech B

Angela Felici Cruz, 5th place

Poetry Reading Masters A

Alexa Go, 1st Place

Poetry Reading Masters B

Rebekah Kim, 2nd Place

Poetry Reading Masters C

Angela Felici Cruz, 1st Place

Prose Reading Masters A

Rebekah Kim, 3rd Place

Prose Reading Masters B

Asako Camacho, 5th place

Prose Reading Masters C

Asako Camacho, 2nd Place

Story Telling A

Dong Ha Lee, 1st Place



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Grace Christian Academy's February NJFL/NFL winners have their picture taken inside the GCA campus.

Impromptu Speech B

Angela Felici Cruz, 5th place

Poetry Reading Masters A

Alexa Go, 1st Place

Poetry Reading Masters B

Rebekah Kim, 2nd Place

Poetry Reading Masters C

Angela Felici Cruz, 1st Place

Prose Reading Masters A

Rebekah Kim, 3rd Place

Prose Reading Masters B

Asako Camacho, 5th place

Prose Reading Masters C

Asako Camacho, 2nd Place

Commentary

Yong Koo Kim, 2nd Place

Dramatic Interpretation A

Crysta Cristobal, 2nd Place

Original Oratory A

Angela Mamaril, 5th Place

Impromptu Speech A

Dong Ha Lee, 1st Place



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Eucon International School students have their picture taken with their teachers after participating in the recent Primary Grade Forensic Competition in Koblerville Elementary School.

EUCON students haul medals in PGFC competition

Once again, Eucon International School students shone at the recent Primary Grade Forensic Competition held in Koblerville Elementary School. They proved their talents and skills by winning in the following categories:

Traci Pillarina	1st	Reading Forum	Timothy Montes	3rd	Choral Speaking A
Paul Santos	2nd	Reading Forum	Naveen Lucenara	2nd	Choral Speaking B
William Xue	3rd	Reading Forum	Yvonne Abustan	2nd	Choral Speaking B
Callia Lucenara	Ist	Dramatic Interpretation	Jeffrey Sheu	2nd	Choral Speaking B
Kiara Bautista	2nd	Dramatic Interpretation	Christopher Mafnas	5th	Choral Speaking B
Allia Pillarina	3rd	Dramatic Interpretation	Joy Yan	5th	Choral Speaking B
Traci Pillarina	4th	Dramatic Interpretation	Ken Cordero	5th	Choral Speaking B
Enoch Chen	5th	Dramatic Interpretation	Jin Seok Park	1st	Humorous Interpretation
Joanah Jimenez	Ist	Dramatic Interpretation	Caleb Yan	2nd	Humorous Interpretation
Ken Cordero	3rd	Dramatic Interpretation	Victoria Nicole Santos	5th	Dramatic Interpretation
Dane Hodges	2nd	Humorous Interpretation	Caleb Yan	3rd	Choral Speaking A
Christopher Mafnas	3rd	Humorous Interpretation	Chisa Kobayashi	3rd	Choral Speaking A
Joanah Jimenez	Ist	DUO A	Elijah Villarmero	3rd	Choral Speaking A
Naveen Lucenara	Ist	DUO A	Jin Seok Park	3rd	Choral Speaking A
Pauline Santos	3rd	Dou B	Victoria Nicole Santos	3rd	Choral Speaking A
Yvonne Abustan	3rd	DUO B	Seon Yeon Song	5th	Choral Speaking A
Joy Yan	4th	DUO B	Ao Feng Zheng	5th	Choral Speaking A
Yvonne Abustan	4th	DUO B	James Reyes	5th	Choral Speaking A
Allia Pillarina	3rd	Choral Speaking A	Jan Matthew Millo	5th	Choral Speaking A
Clark Trasmano	3rd	Choral Speaking A	Sunny Woo	5th	Choral Speaking A
Dane Hodges	3rd	Choral Speaking A	Ivy Leong	4th	DUO A
Chan Yang Woo	3rd	Choral Speaking A	Joanie Paraiso	4th	DUO A

The EUCON International School administration expresses its gratitude to all faculty and staff who sacrificed and invested their time in molding and sharpening the talents of all EUCON students as well as to Harold Easton and to all PGFC staff for their great work.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Winners proudly pose with their SAEF School and Kids Cove Learning Center teachers.

Griffins in action

The last meet before the Regionals of the Primary Grade Forensic Competition was held in Koblerville Elementary School. SAEF School and Kids Cove Learning Center students were among the many who joined. The Griffins competed with fervor. They took home the following ribbons:

K-2 DIVISION

3rd place, Choral Speaking: John Michael Balgos, Eddie Valdez, Janvier Carlo Pascua, Cyrene May Saulog

5th place, Duo: Rohan Nathan de Jesus & Eli Lumbana
5th place, Duo: Angel Lou Buensalido & Betty Matson

3-5 DIVISION
1st place, Impromptu: Qian Ling Na Xiao Xiao
2nd place, Choral Speaking: Dondi Ferrer, Maverick Irang, Myka Villegas, Curtis Mostales, Qian Ling Na Xiao Xiao

3rd place, Duo: Myka Villegas and Deirdre Rosete
4th place, Reader's Forum Masters: Keisha Fajardo
4th place, Choral Speaking: Christian Aldan, Rejenemhay Jingco, Aaron Pascua, Jeggier Labao
5th place, Reader's Forum Masters: Rejenemhay Jingco

Life & Style

JFK intern recounts long-ago affair in a new book

By KAREN MATTHEWS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—Mimi Alford was terrified in 1998 when the Monica Lewinsky scandal turned the word “intern” into a dirty joke, exposing an affair with a United States president. Her decades-old secret about her trysts with John F. Kennedy was still safe then.

Outed in a 2003 biography and a New York newspaper account, Alford has learned to tell her story and not be ashamed of it—from the moment she said Kennedy seduced her on her fourth day working at the White House until the affair ended shortly before his death.

In *Once Upon a Secret: My Affair with President John F. Kennedy and its Aftermath*, published last week by Random House, she writes of her first encounter as a naive teenager, her “varied and fun” sex life with Kennedy, whom she always called Mr. President.

She was 19 and had no sexual experience when she first went to bed with Kennedy in his wife, Jacqueline’s bedroom. It was June 1962.

“Short of screaming,” she writes, “I doubt I could have done anything to thwart his intentions.”

Nor did she want to thwart his intentions.

“I wouldn’t describe what happened that night as making love,” she writes. “But I wouldn’t call it nonconsensual, either.” Addressing people who have questioned the encounter, she said, “I don’t consider it was rape. I have never considered it rape because I was willing.”

The relationship continued, even after Alford had become engaged while attending college in suburban Boston, until Kennedy’s 1963 assassination, she wrote.

The two raced rubber ducks in the bathtub; they had multiple sexual encounters, though he never kissed her; when he called her at her college dorm, he would use the code name Michael Carter, she wrote.

Her account seems “quite credible,” said Robert Dallek, whose Kennedy biography made a passing reference to a college sophomore who was a favorite of the president’s.

“This is how he operated,” Dallek said. “He was a compulsive womanizer.”

A lawyer for the Kennedy family did not respond to requests for comment over the weekend.

Writing the book was liberating, Alford said an interview last week in her publisher’s midtown offices. Now 68, Alford was slim and elegant in a gray knit dress, gray pageboy hairstyle and pearl earrings.



In this Feb. 10, 2012 photo, Mimi Alford, author of “Once Upon a Secret: My Affair with President John F. Kennedy and its Aftermath,” poses for a photograph, in New York.

She was Marion “Mimi” Beardsley when she arrived at the White House press office the summer after her freshman year at Wheaton College in Massachusetts, then an all-girls school.

The affair began during her summer internship and continued when she returned to Wheaton in the fall, she wrote. It continued while she dated and until a few months after her engagement to Tony Fahnestock, a senior at Williams. She was deep into wedding preparations when Kennedy was shot.

Overcome with grief, she confessed the affair to her fiance. He told her never to breathe a word of it. She promised, fearful that the only alternative was to break off the engagement, and she largely kept the promise, telling only a trusted few. It took years for her to see the connection between her silence about the relationship and “the emotional shutting down” that had blighted much of her life.

“I needed to look at the secret and then look at the impact of having kept the secret for so long,” she said.

Mimi and Tony Fahnestock divorced in 1991 and he died in 1993. Alford married again in 2005, to Dick Alford. Her two daughters from her marriage to Fahnestock are in their 40s, are mothers themselves and have supported her decision to write of her experience, she said.

The book took several years and multiple drafts. Alford supplemented her memory with research at the Kennedy Library, where she found her name on passenger logs from plane trips with Kennedy’s entourage.

The story she tells is not always flattering to Kennedy or to Alford herself.

She felt no guilt, she wrote, with regard to the first lady, whom she never met.

“I do now,” she said.

But at the time, “it wasn’t as

if I was trying to replace her or that the president was trying to replace her. I think I just went along. And so I didn’t feel guilty. It’s kind of embarrassing to say that.”

Alford knows that readers may judge her harshly; “it doesn’t frighten me,” she said.

She describes Kennedy as “a kind and thoughtful man.” And then, she tells stories of what she calls his darker side.

She says Kennedy once asked her to “take care of” his aide Dave Powers, who had served as the go-between facilitating the affair; she performed oral

sex on Powers while Kennedy watched. The president later apologized to both of them.

On another occasion, she wrote, he asked her to do the same for his brother Teddy. She refused.

Then there was a party with a “fast Hollywood crowd” at Bing Crosby’s house in Palm Springs, California, that she attended with the president. A guest offered yellow pills that she believed were poppers, or amyl nitrate, a drug often used to enhance sexual pleasure.

Kennedy asked her if she wanted to try one and she said

no, but she said he popped the capsule and held it under her nose anyway.

“Within minutes of inhaling the powder, my heart started racing and my hands began to tremble,” she writes. “This was a new sensation, and it frightened me. I panicked and ran crying from the room, praying that it would end soon.”

Alford debated whether to share episodes like this, taking them out of the book and putting them back in. If she had excluded them, she said, “it would have felt like I was not telling the whole story.”

When the affair with Kennedy was revealed in 2003—the Daily News of New York published her name—Alford spent a few days holed up in her apartment with the media camped outside. Then they left and she started going to work and going grocery shopping again.

After interviews to promote “Once Upon a Secret,” she expects to return to her quiet life once more.

“It’s sort of like closing a chapter on that 18 months,” she said, “and closing a chapter on keeping secrets.”

In Humble Gratitude

We the family of the late

**Staff Sergeant
George Joseph “Keoki”
Affatico Sablan,**

wish to express our heartfelt appreciation to family, friends and acquaintances for their kind expression of love, sympathy and compassion during our time of grieving in the passing of our beloved Keoki into the hands of our Lord.

We truly appreciated your presence at the nightly rosaries, the Mass of Christian Burial and the Interment Service at the CNMI Veterans Cemetery in Marpi.

Our thanks go to His Most Reverend Bishop Tomas A. Camacho (Emeritus), Vicar General Pale Ryan Jimenez, Pale Jesse Reyes, Pale Ike Ayuyu, the clergy, alter servers, the En Via Tu Espiritu / Olomwa’ay choir, and our techa Nan Chai R. Cabrera for all your blessings for our dearly departed;

Also to The United States Army, Casualty Assistance Officers-Sergeant First Class Travis Autry and First Sergeant Smith, to Escort Staff Sergeant Morales and Hawaii Regiment Unit Representative Sergeant First Class Lugo, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Customs and Border Patrol, Mr. Ben Camacho - CNMI Veterans Affairs Office, Department of Public Works, Department of Public Safety for all their exemplary service and unwavering support;

Also to Wahiawa General Hospital; KSPN Channel 2 News, Saipan Tribune, Marianas Variety, Flame Tree TV, Tan Holdings Corporation and Borja Funeral Home for all your support and compassionate acknowledgement.

Thank you to all those that assisted in one way or another your presence and generosity will not be forgotten.

Thank you and God Bless You All.

For blacks, mix of 'Help' emotions on Oscar night

By JESSE WASHINGTON
AP NATIONAL WRITER

Despite torrents of debate among African-Americans over the merits of the segregation-era movie "The Help," most still hoped that Viola Davis, who plays a maid, would become just the second black winner of the best actress Oscar.

And so there was widespread disappointment when Davis lost the Academy Award to Meryl Streep on Sunday night. Still, ambivalence tinged the reaction: Besides regret that the ranks of black Oscar winners remained small, many felt relief that a role viewed as stereotypical was not honored.

"O o h h h h h n n n - nooooooooooooooo," wailed Robbin Lee on Twitter.

Lee, a black actress who has appeared in films such as "Seven Pounds" and "Hotel for Dogs," said in an interview that Streep embodies excellence and deserved to win. "But Viola had so much hype this year, and there was so much excitement, and it conjured up so much controversy in the black community about this role...so (the loss) was disappointing."

Yet Lee felt a mix of emotions, since she is eager to see more diverse movie casts in a wider variety of roles. Adding to the conundrum was the best supporting actress victory of Octavia Spencer, who played another maid in "The Help."

Prior to Sunday, only 13 black actors had won Hollywood's highest honor in the Oscars' 84-year history. Only Halle Berry had been chosen best actress, for playing a wounded soul who finds solace in the arms of a white man in "Monster's Ball."

In 1940, Hattie McDaniel



AP
Meryl Streep, right, is congratulated by Viola Davis before accepting the Oscar for best actress in a leading role for "The Help" during the 84th Academy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

became the first African-American to win an Oscar, for a supporting role as a maid called Mammy in the Dixie-glorifying "Gone With the Wind." Since then, a high percentage of black Oscar nominees and winners have played characters such as slaves, African despots, welfare recipients, dysfunctional mothers, drug-addicted musicians or drug-dealing cops.

With Spencer's award, maid roles are responsible for two of the six Oscars won by black actresses. Streep, meanwhile, earned the third Oscar of her transcendent career for playing

former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

Which made Lee wonder: "How inspiring would it be if we could be nominated in roles where we are playing kings, queens, politicians, writers, artists, dancers... we could soar."

The debate over "The Help" made Hollywood's racial issues a recurring theme of Oscar night.

During a skit about what actors were thinking, host Billy Crystal imagined this for Davis: "I want to thank my writer and director for creating the role of a strong black woman that wasn't played by Tyler Perry." He also

quipped: "When I came out of 'The Help' I wanted to hug the first black woman that I saw, which from Beverly Hills is a 45-minute drive."

Presenting an animation award, Chris Rock said the voice genre allowed fat women to play skinny or a wimp to play a gladiator. "And if you're a black man, you can play a donkey or a zebra. You can't play white, oh my God!"

Rock's observation resonated with Monika Brooks, a diversity consultant and self-described "movie dork."

"The problem is not that Davis played a maid," she said. "The problem is there's not more black people in really good roles."

Few, if any, black Hollywood executives have the power to "green-light" a film for production. Of the 5,765 people who vote on the Oscars, nearly 94 percent are white and 77 percent are male, according to a new Los Angeles Times study. The median voter age is 62.

That's why Brooks was not surprised by "The Help" being made or crestfallen when Davis didn't win: "Whoever writes the checks writes the rules."

As the Oscars approached, "The Help" was lambasted in some quarters of the black community. Many perceived it as another instance of black characters being "saved" by whites, or of serving only as vehicles to improve and enlighten white lives.

"Think of Will Smith in 'The Legend of Bagger Vance,' Michael Clarke Duncan in 'The Green Mile,' Anthony Mackie in 'The Adjustment Bureau' and Sir Laurence Fishburne's Morpheus in 'The Matrix,'" said Toure, the cultural commentator who uses just one name, writing in Time.

Black actors who have won Academy Awards:

BEST ACTOR

Sidney Poitier, 1963, "Lilies Of The Field"
Denzel Washington, 2001, "Training Day"
Jamie Foxx, 2004, "Ray"
Forest Whitaker 2006, "The Last King of Scotland"

BEST ACTRESS

Halle Berry, 2001, "Monster's Ball"

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

Hattie McDaniel, 1939, "Gone With The Wind"
Whoopi Goldberg, 1990, "Ghost"
Jennifer Hudson, 2006, "Dreamgirls"
Mo'Nique, 2009, "Precious"
Octavia Spencer, 2011, "The Help"

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

Louis Gossett, Jr., 1982, "An Officer and A Gentleman"
Denzel Washington, 1989, "Glory"
Cuba Gooding Jr., 1996, "Jerry Maguire"
Morgan Freeman, 2004, "Million Dollar Baby"

author James McBride: "It's the same old story: Nothing in this world happens unless white folks says it happens."

Watching "The Help" was torture for Toure. But as a black man, he was disappointed that Davis lost.

"I hated the film but respect Viola's immense talent," he said in an interview. "I wanted her to get recognition for her talent and to get the power that comes with winning."

The Oakland activist and journalist Davey D said it seemed like a contradiction for critics to slam the film but support Davis and Spencer.

"Y'all should be happy the maid flick didn't win," he tweeted. It was nominated for best picture, but lost to "The Artist."

"The fear was Viola winning or 'The Help' winning would've

age that many black folks found stereotypical, inaccurate and overall problematic," he said in an interview. "A win was seen as a setback."

Not for Barbara Young, who has worked for 17 years as a domestic worker and is an organizer for the National Domestic Workers Alliance. Watching the film, Young cried when Davis' character was separated from a white child—she had endured several such partings in real life.

Young traveled from New York to Los Angeles for an Oscar viewing party organized by the National Domestic Workers Alliance. When Streep's name was called instead of Davis', the room of 50 people let out a huge groan.

"It was a very sad situation in that room," said Young, an immigrant from Barbados. "I was disappointed, but I was very grateful to the producers of the movie for bringing domestic work to the forefront."

She saw a simple reason for the criticism of the maid role: "It's not recognized as real work."

Davis certainly knows that it's real work—her mother and grandmother both toiled as maids.

During Oscar season, Davis consistently advocated for a wider range of black roles. "I've played a lot of drug addicts," she said in an interview with Terry Gross of NPR.

And she told Tavis Smiley that black people who are ambivalent about "The Help" have a mindset that is "absolutely destroying the black artist," because it forces black actors to water down their performances—to avoid character flaws that might offend oversensitive black audiences.

"The black artist cannot live in the place—in a revisionist place," Davis told Smiley. "The black artist can only tell the truth about humanity, and humanity is messy."

Chinese architect Wang Shu wins Pritzker Prize

By DERRIK J. LANG
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Chinese architect Wang Shu, whose buildings have been praised for their commanding presence and careful attention to the environment, has won the 2012 Pritzker Architecture Prize, the prize's jury announced Monday.

The 49-year-old architect joins Frank Gehry, Tadao Ando, Renzo Piano and Eduardo Souto de Moura in receiving the honor that's been called architecture's Nobel Prize. Wang, the first Chinese architect to receive the honor, is recognized for the museums, libraries, apartment complexes and other structures that he has designed in China.

"The fact that an architect from China has been selected by the jury, represents a significant step in acknowledging the role that China will play in the development of architectural ideals," Thomas J. Pritzker said in a statement. "In addition, over the coming decades, China's success at urbanization will be important to China and to the world."

Some of Wang's notable design accomplishments include salvaging more than two million

tiles from demolished traditional houses to cover the roofs of Xingshan Campus buildings. He designed half the Library of Wenzheng College underground because Suzhou gardening traditions suggest that buildings located between water and mountains should not be prominent.

"China's unprecedented opportunities for urban planning and design will want to be in harmony with both its long and unique traditions of the past and with its future needs for sustainable development," said Pritzker. "The selection of Wang Shu reflects the jury's view that his work represents that standard of excellence which will be so critical to China's future."

Wang, who founded his Amateur Architecture Studio firm with his wife, Lu Wenyu, in 1997, has served as the head of the architecture department of the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou since 2000. He is also a frequent visiting lecturer at universities around the world, including Harvard University, University of Texas and University of Pennsylvania.

The formal Pritzker ceremony will be held May 25 in Beijing. Wang will receive a \$100,000 grant and a bronze medallion.



Shu



AP
In this undated image released courtesy of The Hyatt Foundation, an exterior view of Ceramic House, designed by Chinese architect Wang Shu, is shown in Jinhua, China.

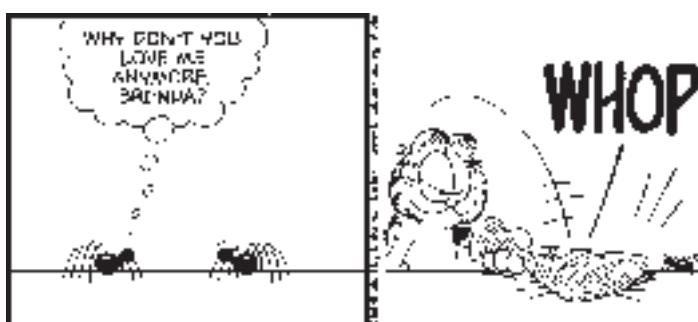
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Are Heat and Thunder in NBA's June forecast?



ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Kevin Durant says it's too early to think about a potential Heat-Thunder NBA finals.

It seems hard to ignore at the season's midpoint.

The teams share the league's best record and both rolled into the All-Star break. With Durant and Russell Westbrook on one side and LeBron James, Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh looking to avenge their finals disappointment, the series could be a thriller.

But Chicago is right on Miami's heels in the East, and a number of contenders could emerge for the Thunder out West.

The second half opens Tuesday, and the other big story is Dwight Howard's situation. Orlando has to decide by the March 15 deadline if it will keep or trade its franchise center.

LeBron James and the Heat burn for a second chance. Kevin Durant and the Thunder are storming toward their first opportunity.

An NBA finals matchup is easy to picture.

Durant isn't looking.

"It's too early for that," the All-Star game MVP said. "We're trying to take it a game at a time, a day at a time. I know in Oklahoma City, we look forward to getting better every day, and we'll see what happens."

If the All-Star game was an indication, the series would be a thriller.

Durant and Thunder teammate Russell Westbrook helped shoot the West to a big lead. James and Dwyane Wade almost brought the East all the way back before James' turnover in the final seconds allowed the West to escape with a 152-149 victory.

James endured plenty of similar late-game disappointments last June, when Miami fell to Dallas in its first finals with its Big Three. He vowed to be better and play looser this season, and he went into the break as the MVP favorite after a sensational first half for himself and his team.

"We've got a lot of season to go. I'm on the right path, back to playing basketball how I play, and that's back to having fun at a high level," James said. "The best thing about this season so far, we're playing some good basketball. Our team feels that we are one right now, especially with last year under our belt, so we're just going to try to get better every day."

Miami and Oklahoma City rolled into the break with a share of the NBA's best record at 27-7. The Heat have won eight in a row in overwhelming fashion; the Thunder have won five straight and are 15-1 at home.

The NBA's best headed out of Orlando on Monday, and soon Dwight Howard will learn if he's joining them. The Magic have until the March 15 trade deadline to decide whether they



AP
Western Conference's Kevin Durant, left, of the Oklahoma City Thunder, passes the ball around Eastern Conference's LeBron James (6), of the Miami Heat, in the second half of the NBA All-Star basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in Orlando, Fla.

will honor his trade request or keep him until the end of the season and risk him leaving as a free agent in July.

The Magic have the East's fourth-best record and look good enough at times to be viewed as a contender. Still,

they and everyone else in the

East seem clearly behind Miami and Chicago, whether they keep

their franchise center or not.

Howard said the Magic haven't hit their peak yet and have an opportunity to compete for the title.

"That says a lot about our team and about the growth of the team despite everything that's been going around," he said. "We've been able to stay focused on what we need to do, and we're only going to get better."

Still, the East appears to be shaping up as a two-team race between the Heat and Bulls, who are a half-game back despite battling injuries to All-Stars Derrick Rose and Luol Deng and especially to Richard Hamilton.

Boston's Rajon Rondo has also been linked to trade rumors, potentially making another All-Star available. Howard's status also affects potential destinations such as the Nets and Mavericks, so business will get just as much at-

York has recovered from a poor start behind Jeremy Lin and Boston hopes to bounce back from a disappointing first half, but a rematch of last year's Eastern Conference finals appears likely.

The playoff picture is less clear in the West. San Antonio surged into the break despite playing for much of the first half without Manu Ginobili; the Los Angeles Clippers have become quick contenders since acquiring Chris Paul; and Dallas may still be good enough for a long playoff run.

Then there's the Lakers, whose rocky road will have taken another bad turn if the broken nose Kobe Bryant sustained after a hard foul by Wade in the All-Star game forces him to miss time.

He recently expressed his frustration with team management for the way it has gone about deciding if it will or won't trade Pau Gasol. He'll be even grumpier if he has to watch the Clippers end their reign as Pacific Division champions.

Boston's Rajon Rondo has also been linked to trade rumors, potentially making another All-Star available. Howard's status also affects potential destinations such as the Nets and Mavericks, so business will get just as much at-

tention as basketball next month.

"No question," the Nets' Deron Williams said. "The deadline's on the 15th and every year they move the deadline up."

With the lockout delaying the season and reducing it to 66 games, the All-Star break actually comes right at the midpoint of the season. Many teams were happy to have the break and eager for practice time after so little was available because of the frequency of games.

That hasn't affected the Heat or Thunder, who rank first and third in the NBA in scoring with 103.7 and 102.7 points, respectively. Miami has been as dominant as expected when it put its trio together, winning by nearly 10 points a game and even more during their win streak.

The Thunder were built more gradually, winning just 23 games three seasons ago. They reached the West finals last year and seem poised to go further now.

"We worked our way to the top," Westbrook said. "So it's not a bad thing to be on top and be where we want to be at this halfway point."

And come June, Heat and Thunder could in the NBA's forecast.

Sacramento, Kings & NBA reach tentative arena deal

By ANTONIO GONZALEZ
AP SPORTS WRITER

the process a "slow death" and likened the city's efforts to a "Hail Mary."

Johnson made a desperate pitch to the NBA Board of Governors last April to give the city a final chance to come up with an arena plan. He also bought time by presenting more than \$10 million in commitments for new advertising, ticket purchases and other financial support from regional businesses for this season.

The NBA's relocation committee, headed by Oklahoma City owner Clay Bennett, who moved the team now known as the Thunder from Seattle in 2008, recommended that the league give the city a shot to follow through—and handed down a March 1 deadline to come up with a plan to help finance an arena.

In the end, the deal was strong enough to convince the Maloofs to stay—pending the City Council's approval.

"I think when we left Sacramento and came to Orlando, you guys asked me how close we were. I thought it was a free throw—and you need to make two free throws," Johnson told reporters at a news conference at the Waldorf Astoria at Walt Disney World. "I think the city made the first free throw, and the Maloof family made the second free throw."

"It's game over."

Well, almost.

Under the proposed terms of the deal, the city will contribute \$200-\$250 million to the estimated \$387 million arena, mostly by leasing out parking garages around the facility, a person with knowledge of the negotiations said. The person, speaking on condition of anonymity because the full financing plan will not be made public until at least Thursday, said Sacramento also will create revenue through a ticket surcharge.

The Maloofs have agreed to contribute \$75 million in up-front cash, which includes the sale of land around the team's current suburban arena, along with paying off a current \$67 million loan to the city and contributing more over the course of the deal. Arena operator AEG also agreed to pay almost \$60 million.

"I think it's great for our community," a tearful Gavin Maloof said. "I'm glad it's finally coming to an end after 13 years. It's been a long road."

The Kings almost moved to Anaheim, Calif., a year ago before Johnson and city leaders convinced the league to give Sacramento one last chance to help finance an arena. At one point, Johnson—a former NBA All-Star with the Phoenix Suns—even called

"Anaheim remains NBA-ready and I look forward to the day we will have our own NBA team, but today I offer my best wishes to Sacramento. Well done," Tait said.

Despite attempts by Anaheim and Seattle to swoop in and lure the Kings, the fate of the franchise is in the hands of the Sacramento City Council—which has approved every arena measure to date under the current project. The arena, which would open for the 2015-16 season in the downtown Sacramento rail yards, is a vote away from breaking ground.

"I've had the great pleasure ... of opening up two arenas and I'm looking forward to opening up a third in Sacramento," Stern said. "I want the Maloof family to get back to Sacramento fast because I've asked them to get those renewals out for next season."

Griffin believes he was even faster at combine



WACO, Texas (AP)— Robert Griffin was able to impress teams and scouts without throwing a pass at the NFL combine.

There was his official time of 4.41 seconds in the 40-yard dash, fastest among quarterbacks, and the Heisman Trophy winner believes he ran even faster. And there were interviews with at least eight teams, including the Indianapolis Colts, who have the No. 1 draft pick.

“I think I was able to go out there and affirm to the scouts how athletic I am, or impress them even more,” Griffin said Monday. “I was able to show people that I am as advertised. I’m a good guy, I like to make people laugh. I can’t remember a meeting I didn’t go in and we weren’t laughing.”

“You go there and do what you’re supposed to do, create a buzz for yourself,” he said.

Maybe Griffin gave the Colts more to consider amid consistent speculation that they will use the top pick April 26 on Stanford’s Andrew Luck, the Heisman runner-up.

If nothing else, RG3 likely created even more of a premium for the No. 2 pick held by St. Louis. The Rams already have a young quarterback in Sam Bradford and could be willing to deal the pick.

Neither Griffin or Luck threw over the weekend. They will wait until their pro days later this month.

As for his already-impressive 40-yard dash, Griffin said he was given a better time when he had finished running. He said his representatives are checking into that.

“I was told on the field that it was 4.35 officially. They told me it was faster than what the screen had posted,” Griffin said. “If that happens to be the right time, that’s nothing to be mad about, 4.41 is a great time. But you want to make sure the right time is put up there.”

By RONALD BLUM
AP SPORTS WRITER



Catcher Jason Varitek has decided to retire after 15 seasons with the Red Sox, a person familiar with the decision told The Associated Press on Monday night. The person requested anonymity because Varitek had not made an announcement.

The Boston Globe first reported Varitek’s decision.

Varitek is expected to make it official Thursday at Boston’s spring training camp in Fort Myers, Fla.

A first round draft pick in 1994, Varitek came to Boston with Derek Lowe in a trade from Seattle for Heathcliff Slocumb in 1997 and spent his entire big league career with the Red Sox. He caught four no-hitters, made three All-Star teams won two World Series titles, all the while endearing himself to the team’s demanding fan base with his unyielding work ethic and a refusal to back down.

Varitek surpassed Carlton Fisk for most games caught in a Red Sox uniform back in 2006 and finished with 1,488 games behind the plate. He has a career average of .256 with 193 home runs and 757 RBIs. His best statistical season came in 2003, when he hit .273 with 25 homers and 85 RBIs, giving the Red Sox the luxury



Baylor quarterback Robert Griffin III runs a drill at the NFL football scouting combine in Indianapolis on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012. AP

Griffin’s pro day will be on the Baylor campus March 21, the day before Luck has his. Among the familiar receivers Griffin will get to throw to is Bears teammate Kendall Wright, an NFL prospect himself.

“This is easy now. ... The stress is over,” Griffin said. “If you’re out there stressing on your pro day, then you’re not going to perform well, so I plan on hav-

ing a little fun. Play a little music while we’re out there throwing the football, have everybody tapping their toes and bobbing their head and just go out there and make the most of the experience.”

Baylor’s first Heisman Trophy winner was back on campus to do a photo shoot for EA Sports’ NCAA Football 13 game. The game will be released July 10 with RG3 sharing the cover with one of

eight former Heisman winners that will be determined by a fan vote.

When asked if he wanted to be posed as a thrower or a runner, Griffin smiled and quickly responded, “Thrower. I’m a quarterback, not a running back.”

While he’s still plenty fast, the former track star has proven he can throw the football.

Griffin is the school’s career passing

leader, with 10,366 yards, 78 touchdowns and only 17 interceptions. His 2,254 yards and 33 TDs rushing are records for a Bears quarterback. Those are among 54 records he broke or tied in 41 games at Baylor, which matched a school record with 10 wins last season.

Before he had played his first football game at Baylor, Griffin was already a Big 12 champion in the 400-meter hurdles, then finished third in the NCAA meet and participated in the U.S. Olympic trials in that event. He was a 17-year-old freshman after graduating high school early.

Griffin worked extensively with quarterback consultant Terry Shea to prepare for the combine. The dual-threat quarterback will return to Arizona to keep tuning up for his more scripted pro day in three weeks.

The interviews at the combine gave Griffin his long-awaited chance to tell NFL teams about Baylor’s potent spread-formation offense which he felt people misunderstood because of his impressive video game-like numbers.

“I was able to show them that we don’t run a simple spread offense, that we do have pro aspect tied within our offense,” he said. “And my football IQ is high.”

Among the teams he interviewed with were Miami, Washington, Minnesota and Kansas City. He said all went well, including his talk with Indianapolis executives trying to decide what to do with franchise quarterback Peyton Manning and that top pick.

“I had them laughing in there as well,” he said. “I was excited to go in there. You would think that meeting would be a little bit more stressful because of the weight that’s held behind it, but it wasn’t stressful at all. You just go in there and be yourself.”

“If they like you, they like you,” he said. “If they don’t and decide to go a different way, that’s just the nature of the game.”

Source: Red Sox’s Varitek to retire Thursday

of having some offensive punch from the catcher position.

But it was always about more than numbers with Varitek.

His icy stare, rugged beard and crew cut hairstyle was the perfect look for a rag-tag group that helped end decades of inferiority to the hated Yankees with a magical run to the World Series title in 2004. He caught no-hitters from

Hideo Nomo in 2001, Derek Lowe in 2002, Clay Buchholz in 2007 and Jon Lester in 2008.

He was chosen captain two months after the ‘04 Series, becoming just the third Red Sox captain in since 1923—joining Hall of Famers Carl Yastrzemski and Jim Rice and cementing his status as a cornerstone of the franchise.

“I don’t think you’re going to find

anybody in there who has played with him who says they’re not going to miss him,” Red Sox ace Josh Beckett said last week when asked about the possibility of Varitek hanging it up. “If ‘Tek doesn’t come back, he’s going to be missed, severely, both in the clubhouse and out in the field.”

The news of his retirement should come as little surprise. Varitek’s pro-

A’s 3B Sizemore out for season with knee tear

PHOENIX (AP)—Athletics third baseman Scott Sizemore will miss the entire 2012 season after tearing a ligament in his left knee last weekend during Oakland’s first full-squad workout.

Sizemore was injured Saturday at Oakland’s spring training camp in Phoenix. He had an MRI and the A’s announced Monday that he had torn his anterior cruciate ligament.

“Broken heart right here. Safe to say I’ve cried more over baseball than anything in my life,” tweeted Sizemore’s wife, Brooke.

The 27-year-old Sizemore was acquired by Oakland last May in a trade with Detroit. He hit .249 with 11 home runs and 52 RBIs in 93 games with the A’s.

“I really feel badly for Scott,” A’s manager Bob Melvin said. “He’s worked extremely hard and was ready for a breakout season this year. We were

counting on him to provide some much-needed power from the right side of the plate. Now his total focus has to be on a successful surgery and rehabilitation so he can return stronger than ever.”

Because of swelling, Sizemore will be re-evaluated in two weeks to see when a date for surgery can be set.

The injury came almost a month before the A’s open the major league season. They play Seattle on March 28 in Tokyo to start a two-game series.

Sizemore, who broke his left ankle in 2009 during Arizona Fall League play, was expected to be in the open-

ing day lineup.

“In his absence, we feel we have some viable options in Adam Rosales, Eric Sogard and Josh Donaldson. They can all bring something to the position,” Melvin said.

Donaldson briefly played for the A’s in 2010. Originally a first-round draft pick of the Chicago Cubs, Donaldson was traded to the A’s in a deal for pitcher Rich Harden.

Donaldson played third base during his junior year at Auburn and was used at third 53 times in the Athletics’ organization.

Melvin indicated that Rosales, Sogard and the Timmons would be more valuable as utility players. The A’s have 10 infielders in camp.

duction dipped in recent seasons, and he was supplanted as the everyday catcher, first by Victor Martinez and then by Jarrod Saltalamacchia last season. He hit .221 with 11 homers and 36 RBIs in 68 games, and his influence as a leader couldn’t stop the season from collapsing in September amid allegations of players eating fried chicken and drinking beer in the clubhouse during the game.

General manager Ben Cherington put the writing on the wall when he signed Saltalamacchia and Kelly Shoppach to one-year deals this winter to do the catching. As a show of respect for all that Varitek has accomplished with the franchise, Cherington offered him an invitation to camp to try and win a job. But the Red Sox had been practicing for more than a week without him.

“He was one of the greatest players in this organization, in my opinion,” Shoppach, who got his start in Boston in 2005, said last week. “I think that everybody learned from him. The brief time that I was with him years ago, there are still some things that I do in my everyday routine and my preparation that you know can’t help but rub off from him.”

It truly is the end of an era for the Red Sox, who also saw knuckleballer Tim Wakefield retire after 17 seasons with the team just before spring training started.

Sunrisers rout Smart Cagers in DLX/Miller Lite caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

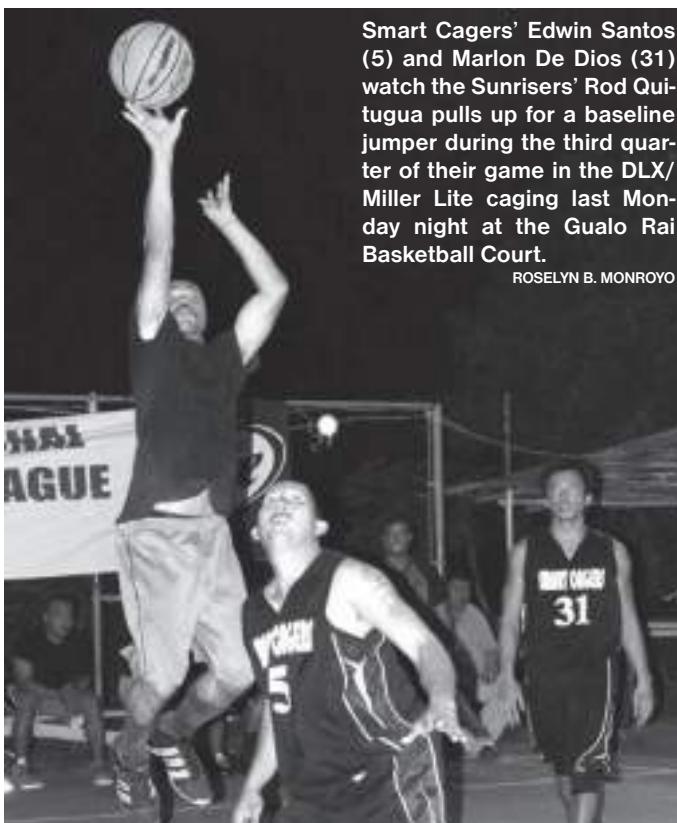
DLX
The Sunrisers cruised to their third win in four games in the 2nd Domino Lux International Fraternity/Miller Lite Basketball Invitational Friendship League after whipping Smart Cagers, 88-72, in the lone match completed last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

Pete Lizama anchored the easy win with his 26 points, making most of them off fast-break layups, as the depleted Smart Cagers were a step or two slow in going back on defense. Lizama had a good supporting crew, drawing 47 points from four of his teammates. Shooters Josh Sablan and Preston Basa chipped in 16 and 12, respectively, Jawn Joyner added 10, and Walter Mendez contributed

nine. Big men Mel Manibusan and Charlie Peters combined for 10, while Chuck Deleon Guerrero logged three to complete the Sunrisers' balance scoring.

Only three players scored in double figures for Smart Cagers, who absorbed their second straight loss and dropped to a 1-3 record. Errol Peredo exploded for 31 markers, Edwin Santos and Marlon De Dios had 18 and 12, respectively, and the rest of the team totaled only nine. The Smart Cagers missed Pete Iguel, while Rommel Usi played only in the second half and missed all his shots, including several triples in the fourth quarter.

While Smart Cagers struggled on offense, the Sunrisers were fired up early in the game, making 26 points against the former's only nine. Lizama drilled the Sunrisers' first three baskets and finished the open-



Smart Cagers' Edwin Santos (5) and Marlon De Dios (31) watch the Sunrisers' Rod Quittuga pulls up for a baseline jumper during the third quarter of their game in the DLX/Miller Lite caging last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

ing quarter with 10 points, while Josh Sablan and Basa had five each and drained one triple apiece to give their team an early double-digit margin.

The Sunrisers continued to pull away in the next two quarters, as Lizama continued to toy around with the defense of Smart Cagers and his teammates also stepping up, hitting jumpers and undergoal stabs. By the end of the third period, the Sunrisers were ahead by 21, 70-49.

Then in the fourth quarter, Smart Cagers behind Peredo made one final push for a comeback, but managed to move only within 12 points, 63-75. Lizama, Mendez, and Josh Sablan teamed up in a short 8-0 run to stop Smart Cagers' rally.

Meanwhile, Mobil's last two games were rained-out, leaving the team with only one completed match. Mobil's game against Blue Haus about two weeks

ago was also stalled and will be played for five more minutes.

Mobil faced Shirley's Coffee Shop last Saturday and was ahead in the fourth quarter, 63-57, when the game was called off due to rain with still 5:53 left on the clock.

Then last Monday after the Sunrisers beat Smart Cagers, Mobil duelled Andhok's Grille and the match was also suspended due to rain at the 4:11 mark of the second period. Andhok's was on top, 30-25, and the game will resume on a later date with the leading team in possession.

Sunrisers 88 – Lizama 26, Jos. Sablan 16, Basa 12, Joyner 10, Mendez 9, Peters 6, Manibusan 4, Deleon Guerrero 3.

Smart Cagers 72 – Peredo 31, Santos 18, De Dios 12, Dayrit 4, Rivera 3, Gamboa 2.

Scoring by quarters: 26-9, 43-31, 70-49, 88-72.

5 PAIRS

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event and went 3-0 in the opening week. Two of their three victories came via distance. The duo first challenged Shirley's Robert Reyes and Hilario, dropped the opening game, 22-24, but stole the win after sweeping the last two, 21-18, 21-17. In their second match, Arago and Balarao also fell to Golden Racquet's Roger Vales and Jojo Savellano in the first game, 15-21, before recovering in the final two games, 21-16, 21-12, to grab the win. Next up for the tandem of Arago and

Balarao were Sam Jones and Glen Buultjens and the former won anew this time via sweep, 21-11, 21-10.

Santos and Montoya are also playing in the men's A doubles and recorded a straight game win over SBC's Effen Caedac and Joel Ortega, 21-13, 21-11, and then slipped past the Berks' Saul Gargallo and John Rivera in three games, 21-13, 14-21, 21-15.

In the men's B doubles, Macario and Hilario and Oh and Caranto hold similar 2-0 records after Week 1. Macario and Hilario's first win came against Vales and Savellano, 19-21, 21-16, 21-16 and the second from

Taga's Luis Camacho and Panapa Peteru, 21-17, 21-13.

Oh and Caranto's twin victories were also via sweeps. They downed Savellano and Vales, 21-14, 21-16, and Camacho and Peteru, 21-10, 21-14.

Also notching a 2-0 card was Dotimas and Nopia, who won in the men's C singles over AON's Ferdie Santos and Ramil Belalba, 21-13, 21-12, and SBC's Ortega and Park Sang Do, 21-13, 22-20.

In other results, the Berks' Wowie Abuel and Yiac Caracut and Jeffrey Rimam and Rommel Bartolome won their respective opening games. Abuel and

Caracut prevailed over Camacho and Peteru in the men's B, 21-12, 21-11, while Rimam and Bartolome topped AON's Celso Agui and Ramil Estrellano in the men's C game, 21-8, 21-16.

For SBC, Ortega and Caedac are also entered in the men's B and survived Shirley's Brendon Talaia and Aries Cordero, 22-20, 19-21, 24-22. Also delivering a win for SBC were Dick Quinto and Mario Diola, who outclassed Golden Racquet's Edwin Maratas and Narlou Achas in the men's A, 15-21, 21-12, 21-15.

For Taga, Rodwealth Espana notched two wins in Week 1.

He first teamed up with Andrew Galvez and they won their men's A game against Gargallo and Revilla, 21-12, 21-4. In the men's B, Espana partnered with Northern Marianas Badminton Association president Jerry Tan and they swept Golden Racquet's Achas and Lito Mendoza, 22-20, 21-18.

Completing Week 1 winners were Golden Racquet and men's C Eydie Uy and Jordan Pangelinan, who defeated the Berks' Bartolome and Rimam, 22-20, 21-16.

Results in the opening week of the women's doubles will be published in *Saipan Tribune's* Thursday edition.

DEFENDING

From Page 28

that was easily the evening's most entertaining matchup.

Bob Coldeen served as opening night master of ceremonies with Gus Kaipat singing the U.S. and CNMI anthems.

Marianas Pacific Distributors general manager Guy Pudney appeared as the guest speaker and CSA president Mark Palacios delivered the closing remarks.

Other CSA officers include vice president B.J. Attao, secretary Liz Palacios-Oluquachel, treasurer Liz A. Lebria, and advisor Joey Dela Cruz.

The CSA would like to thank the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, the Division of Sports & Recreation, Division of Youth Services, Coldeen, Kaipat, Bernie C. Palacios, Antonio and Marilyn E. Santos, MARPAC, IT&E, Audit Company, J's Restaurant, Natibu Sports Association, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Saipan Apparel, and Team G-Ballers.

This year's 15-team men's division is comprised of defending champions Man Amigos, X-clusive, Talu Fahn, Manelos, Natibu, Familia, Saipal, The Warriors, Managaha, 6-Pack, G-Ballers, Team Elias, Berdax, Your Balls, and Gagu Eyes.

The five women's teams include the aforementioned Saku-di, 670 Babes, Check It Out, Enamo Meta, and Rookies.

Man Amigos 9, Gagu Eyes 6

Man Amigos led it, 4-1, after three innings off a pair of two-run homers by Manny Sablan and John Reyes, and then jumped ahead, 9-1, in the next inning off four hits, a sacrifice fly by J.J. Laniyo, and a two-run blast by Julian Camacho. Gagu Eyes tried to mount a comeback in the sixth frame, but the defending champs held strong out in the field.

Sakudi 12, Rookies 1

Home team Sakudi shot in front, 5-0, in the opening frame with six hits; Geri Dela Cruz smashed a two-RBI single, and Thelma Mizer and Janica Lizama also bagged RBIs.

Sakudi then added three more runs in the top of the third frame from an RBI triple by Mizer, who later made it down the line off an error and a sacrifice fly by Dela Cruz.

Rookies managed their lone run to close the third inning off an uncommon error by the defending champs. However, the count sifted to, 11-1, as the latter redeemed the trip up with three more runs to start the fourth.

The caution flag was raised at

the start of the fifth inning and Sakudi added one more to the board for good measure before closing shop early.

Sakudi's Mizer and Kiki Alidan hit triples and batted 2-for-3 with two RBIs and two runs; Dela Cruz swung 1-for-2 with three RBIs; Eileen Babauta went 3-for-3 with an RBI; and Bert Camacho swung 2-for-2 with a run.

Berdax 21, X-clusive 18
X-clusive's cleanup man Harry Nakamura hammered a grand slam to get the game started in proper fashion, but Berdax seized control, 6-4, with a cluster of home runs in the opening frame.

Ben Taisacan lifted a three-run homer, John Taitano a solo shot, Kel Kapileo pulled on a two-run home run, and Dung Tenorio signed off with another solo blast.

X-clusive trimmed the deficit to a run, 7-8, after the second inning. Dennis Ngeskebei and Mike Manas hit RBI singles and J.J. Cabrera elevated a sacrifice fly.

The game then became locked at 10-all after four innings as an RBI double from Berdax's Taitano and a Kapileo sacrifice fly in the bottom of the third inning was obliged by a two-out rally by X-clusive in the ensuing frame. Its top of

the order bashed four hits including a pair of RBI doubles by Reyes and Cabrera with an RBI base rip by Nakamura.

The game was knotted again at 14-all after six and much like its explosive beginning, it was only prudent for this clash to come down to the wire.

Berdax postured with four runs in the bottom of the fifth off five hits, which included a two-RBI double and an RBI base knock, but X-clusive rose from the dead again in the top of the sixth with a two-RBI triple by Reyes and a two-run homer by Cabrera.

Berdax stranded the winning run at third in the bottom of regulation, but survived the eight-inning bout.

X-clusive mustered four runs in the top of the eighth off a two-RBI double by Reyes and a two-RBI single by Vince Cepeda, but Berdax took advantage of some errors early in the bottom of the eighth and caught a second wind that dealt the knockout blow.

Details of Monday's games will be released tomorrow. The season continues tonight on Capital Hill with a men's triple feature starting with the 2011 runners-up Natibu taking on 6-Pack at 6:30pm. Then Familia clashes with Managaha at 7:30pm followed by Saipal against The Warriors at 8:30pm.

ROGOLIFOI

From Page 28

shot dropped 30 feet away from the hall and he attempted for an eagle before settling for a birdie.

Olopai fell one stroke behind Kosam, but had more birdies than the latter with four (Nos. 1, 3, 9, and 12) and was consistent with his game, posting 39s on both nines for a gross 78. The 9-handicapper Olopai beat Manny Mangarero in the scorecard tiebreak (front nine) for third place. Mangarero, who also holds a 9 handicap, had a 40 on the front and 38 on the back, ending up with a net 35.5 in the first nine holes against the 34.5 of Olopai.

MAMI

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miles/21.1K) and 10K (6.2 miles) events.

Majority of this year's participants are from Japan, including Japanese comedian Kampei Hazama, who will also host a golf tournament for local and off-island players this Sunday at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

"In terms of quality and publicity, the Saipan Marathon continues to improve," Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio said. "We believe the marathon remains one of our most successful signature events and the event with the greatest growth potential."

Meanwhile, participants should pick up their race packets this Friday at 4:30pm at the American Memorial Park.

Other RGA members who joined the weekend tournament were Joe Saures (net 71), Frankie Pangelinan (73), Choi (74), Lawrence Camacho Jr. (74), Ki Soo Kim (74), Sonny Flores (76), Tigilau (76), Tom Tebuteb (77), Henry Liang (80), Ahn Hun Jin (82), Bill Limes (82), and Vincent Fung Chai (84).

Meanwhile, RGA would like to thank Saures and his family for hosting a dinner for club members after the tournament. The group also reminds interested individuals that RGA membership is still open for an annual fee of only \$25.

For more information, contact Saures at 483-5506, Jess Wabol at 288-1129, and Kosam at 483-4506.

Then on race day, the full marathon and 50K race will start at 4:30am, followed by the half marathon and 10K events. MVA is reminding motorist to take extra caution during the race day, especially early in the morning.

"The Saipan Marathon is an excellent opportunity for the Saipan community to put our best foot forward in terms of hospitality," MVA community projects manager Martin Dueñas said. "Drive safe on race morning, tie up your dogs, and cheer for the runners if you're on the race course."

This weekend's event is sponsored by Delta Air Lines, New Balance Japan, Scalp D, Toyo Rice, Coca Cola Japan, and Japan Tobacco.

For more information, contact MVA's Ed Diaz at ediaz@mymarianas.com or call 664-3210/1.

CNMI vs Japan Soccer College

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



CNMI and Japan Soccer College players shake hands after their exhibition game at the Oleai Sports Complex Field last Friday. The CNMI won, 2-1.



Ruselle Zapanta kicks the ball quickly before a Japan Soccer College player gets it.



The CNMI's Arkie Reusora, left, tries to keep the ball away from a Japan Soccer College player.



The CNMI's Dakota Hall makes a header against a Japan Soccer College striker.



Peter Loken, who scored the CNMI's twin goals, stops the ball.



A Japan Soccer College striker goes for a header, while the CNMI's Dakota Hall defends.



The CNMI's Steve McKagan, right, is up against two players from Japan Soccer College.



The CNMI's Trey Dunn, right, uses his left foot to keep possession against a Japan Soccer College striker.



CNMI goalie Johann Noetzel scans the pitch first before kicking the ball.



The Japan Soccer College strikers acknowledge the home crowd after a tough game against the CNMI players.



TSL Activity Schedule for February 29, 2012

8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices
6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices



There are no scheduled games.



There are no scheduled games.



There are no scheduled games.

Are Heat and Thunder in NBA's June forecast?

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Griffin believes he was even faster at combine

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

5 pairs unbeaten in men's doubles



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Five pairs got off to good starts in the 2012 Tan Holdings Doubles Badminton Competition after sweeping their men's doubles assignments over the weekend at the TSL Sports Complex.



Posting perfect records in Week 1 were the Berks Blazers' Ferdie Arago and Gerry Balarao, Golden Racquet's Edwin Montoya and Noli Santos and Carlo Dotimas and J.P. Nopia, Shirley's Badminton Club's Puy Macario and Chris Hilario, and Saipan Badminton Club's Jexler Caranto and Oh Im Bog.

Arago and Balarao are entered in the men's A doubles

See 5 PAIRS on Page 26

Saipan Badminton Club's Joel Ortega returns to Golden Racquet's Edwin Montoya and Noli Santos, while teammate Efren Cacdac looks on during the opening game of the men's A division of the Tan Holdings doubles tournament last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Defending champs win as 2012 season starts

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

CHAMOLINIAN Man Amigos and Sakudi started their title-retention campaigns on the right foot as the Chamolinian Softball Association's 2012 Budweiser Slow Pitch Softball League kicked off Friday night at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

The men's defending champions Man Amigos put on a strong showing with a 9-6 victory over Gagu Eyes, while the current women's titleholder Sakudi run-ruled a green Rookies squad, 12-1, in five innings.

The other game of the opener, meanwhile, saw Berdax outlast X-clusive, 21-18, in an eight-inning back-and-forth nail-biter.

See DEFENDING on Page 26



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
Sakudi's Thelma Mizer unleashes a big swing in the Chamolinian Softball Association's 2012 Budweiser Slow Pitch Softball women's division opener against the Rookies last Friday night at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Mami leads Saipan Marathon entries

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

2012 Two-time champion Mamiko Oshima-Berger is among the 785 registered participants in this Saturday's 7th Saipan Marathon.

Oshima-Berger is entered in the full marathon race (42.195km) and is hoping to reclaim the women's championship she last held in 2009. The Saipan runner took her first women's tiara in 2008, before losing in 2010 (3:16:14) and 2011 (3:16:28). Last year, she was just less than three minutes behind eventual women's champion Noriko Hira (3:14:09) of Japan.

"Hopefully, I could get it (women's title) back. But, I will not pressure myself too much. I am focus on keeping my pace and not fade out of the race or have cramps. It will be a tough field this year as I learned two top runners from the 2011 Lake Kawaguchi Nikkan Sports Marathon are joining. I raced against them in November last year and I know what they are capable of," Oshima-Berger said.

After the November race in Lake Kawaguchi, Japan, Oshima-Berger resumed training on Saipan to prepare for this Saturday's event. She runs five times a week, usually one to one and a half hours on weekdays and about



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Mamiko Oshima-Berger cuts the tape at the finish line during last year's Saipan Marathon.

three hours on Saturdays. She also runs at the Oleai Sports Complex oval with Mieko Carey every Tuesday.

This weekend, the former champion is aiming to break her personal best (3:16:14) and complete the second longest race of the day at 3:10:00.

81 to test 50K ultra-marathon

The longest race this weekend will have a grueling distance of 50K and 81 are brave enough to join the newest addition to the annual event.

Besides the two long races, this year's Saipan Marathon also offers half marathon (13.1

See MAMI on Page 26

Rogolifoi steals RGA February Ace

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Last Sunday was payback time for Tony Rogolifoi.

After being booted out in the Top 3 during the February Ace qualifying tournament, Rogolifoi returned at the Kingfisher Golf Links last weekend and fired the group's best net 65.

His score not only topped the 16-player field, but also surpassed the net 67 Jay Choi recorded during the February qualifier early this month also at Kingfisher. Choi set the score to beat for the February Ace tournament after defeating the 68 Kim So, Ray Tigliau, and Rogolifoi tallied in the qualifier where the latter dropped out of the Top 3 after

losing in the scorecard tiebreak on the front nine.

After the sorry loss, 16-handicapper Rogolifoi had vengeance on his eyes and played consistently at the Talafofo course with his 41 and 40 on the front and back nines, respectively. His net 65 is so far the lowest net score early in the 2012 season and it qualified him for the club championship that will be played later this year.

Joining Rogolifoi in the Top 3 in last weekend's tournament were Jordon Kosam and Tars Olopai, who carded a net 68 and 69, respectively.

Kosam, who also sports a 16 handicap, shot a 41 on the front and a 42 on the back for a gross 84. One of the highlights of his game was a birdie on the par-4, 261-yard hole No. 16. His tee

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